Mother Ruth Jones 100-Year Old Activist (See page3)

COMMEMORATOR

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Demand for Intercommunalist News Grows

By Commemorator Staff

Volunteers from East to West, South to North, Expand COMMEMORATOR Circulation

In the face of the urgent need for intercommunalist news, telling the true stories of our exploited and oppressed communities and covering the real issues that affect us, volunteers in cities across the country have stepped forward to help expand the distribution of *The Commemorator.*

Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) Chairman Melvin Dickson is leading this expansion across the country to establish the necessary network of correspondents to continue to grow and reach more and more African-American and working class communities.

The areas targeted for immediate expansion include: New York City, Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Houston, Texas; and suburban Dallas.

CCBPP Photo

CCBPP Chairman Melvin Dickson (center) joins former BPP organizer Henry Mitchell (r) and Lawrence James, co-founder of Grassroots Artist MovEment, at a concert the hip-hop organization hosted at Hunter College in Manhattan in November 2006.

The Commemorator newspaper is the official organ of CCBPP. Each edition of the paper contains the Black Panther Party's Ten-Point Program and BPP archival materials. Through the recent educational activities about the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the Black Panther Party, *The Commemorator* has established correspondence with volunteers and supporters on the East and the West Coast, and in the South and Southwest. This includes the boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, and Manhattan in New York, Seattle, Dallas and other major cities.

In Harlem, New York, former BPP member Henry Mitchell has been organizing with Grassroots Artists MovEment, an assembly of African American Hip-Hop artists who are organizing for health care for artists, reaching a diverse group of young people, including youth from the low-income Puerto Rican and white communities. Mitchell, along with co-founder and director Lawrence James, helps circulate *The Commemorator* through all their activities.

From the Dallas area, Chris Williams told *The Commemorator*, "I'm honored and inspired to help bring about a positive change for my people because the situation that many of us face is really sad and we have to do something to change it." Williams

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Black Panther 40th Anniversary Spells Forward March!

By Commemorator Staff

Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) Chairman, Melvin Dickson, thanked all comrades, friends and supporters who participated in the Celebration and Conference on the 40th Anniversary of the Founding of the BPP held October 13-15, 2006. "This was an historic occasion demonstrating solidarity with the proletariat worldwide, especially the poor and exploited communities on the African continent and in all developing countries," Dickson told attendees at the CCBPP office after the event.

Workshops and Presentations at Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts

Hundreds of concerned families, friends, and organizations participated, and everyone expressed the need to implement the Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program. "Forty years after the founding, we now see the goals and principles as a declaration and a platform to move forward in the continuation of the struggle for justice and peace throughout the world...!" stated Oakland's Ali L.V. King, an ILWU San Francisco local 10 member as well as a CCBPP Outreach Captain.

Highlights of the three-day event included a gathering at the Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts where the program kicked off with a media workshop headed by Elbert "Big Man" Howard, founding member and former BPP Central Committee functionary, Melvin Dickson, Chairman of Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) and Editor of *The Commemorator*. Photographer Stephen Shames spoke about his experience with the Party and his newly released historical photo-essay, *The Black Panthers*. Representative Black journalist Charles Akins of *The Oakland Post* newspaper spoke about his experience covering the early trials of the New York 21.

Akins recalled how those experiences opened his eyes about the nature of the court system and the discrimination and oppression in this country. "After I experienced a great deal of discrimination with the mainstream white media, I decided to work for a

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CCBPP Photo

Dr. Tolbert Small reviews youth members from the Prisoner of Conscience Committee (POCC) headed by Chairman Fred Hampton, Jr. at the BPP 40th Anniversary sponsored by 'It's About Time' at the Malonga Casquelord Center for the Arts in Oakland, CA.

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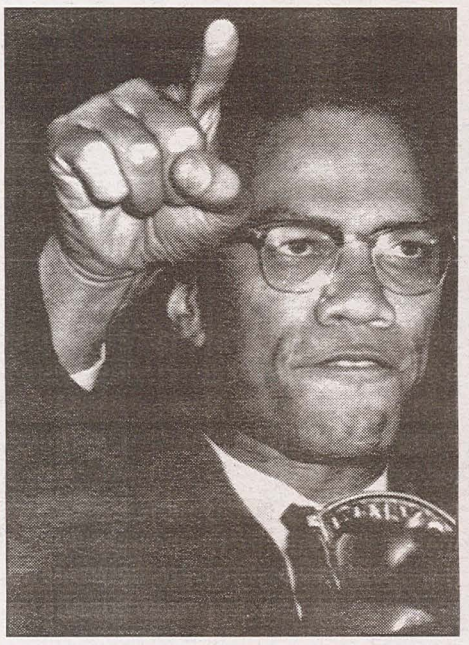
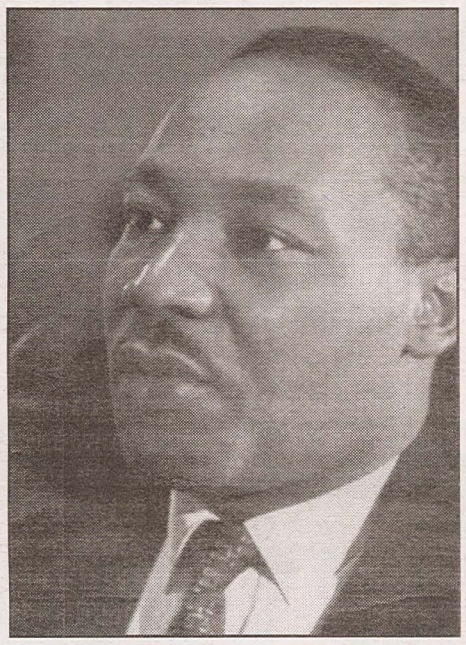
EDITORIAL

Black History Month: Whose Version and for what Final Outcome?





Malcolm X and Martin Luther King advanced goals and objectives that are not the same as Wall Street's commercialized version today.

Every February throughout the country, hundreds of millions of dollars are spent in the capitalist marketplace in recognition of Black History Month. In between commercials and sick sit-coms, they give us two-minute biographic cameos about a renowned black doctor, engineer, soldier, photographer or performer, narrated by Black news commentators, then switch to the ads for drugs to remedy erectile dysfunction, drugs to cure depression, expensive cars and car insurance. The capitalist marketing machines try to tell us that being African-American is about having a Budweiser poster on your wall or smoking Kool cigarettes. On the educational "special" programs, they even remorsefully recognize that the ruling class of this country initially made its wealth through the use of slave labor — Black slave labor. And they give recognition to the struggles and sacrifices of those who led and participated in the Civil Rights movement of the 50's and 60's, offering biographies of heroes who were assassinated in one way or another for their efforts. Then they laud "how far we have come." They do not speak of the slavery that exists to this day inour prisons through "prison labor" programs, or in our welfare systems through "workfare."

Today, the Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party must redefine how Black History Month is celebrated in light of the continued attacks by the ruling class and its government on working class communities, those at the bottom, who work the longest hours for the least pay and are still struggling for the necessities of life in this wealthy land. What we have achieved in our history so far can only be measured by how we use the knowledge to analyze what we must do to continue to organize and fight for the final victory of true political and economic liberation.

We Study History in Order to Change What is Going On

We cannot study black history as separate from labor history, and when we do, we fail to be able to use what we are studying as an effective weapon towards organizing for real change.

When African men and women were forcibly brought to the new continent, they were brought as labor. They were brought as the cheapest possible form of labor — slaves. Once the capitalists abolished this form of chattel slavery, and hired us by the hour instead, we then were wage-slaves. After the Civil War and since, each and every time that labor in the US has tried to organize and left out Black workers from their organizing, or allowed any other part of the working class to remain unorganized and oppressed, labor lost. Every time labor won anything worth winning anywhere at anytime, they militantly included those kept most desperate by labor's opponents, including African-Americans, Asian-Americans, Hispanic-Americans, women, and undocumented and unrecognized workers.

Black slaves, servitude slaves, mineworkers, railroad workers, farm workers, and today's service, domestic, and temporary workers provided the labor that built the country. And, today, labor and the working poor in general are under attack in many ways, through many methods. Those in power continue to pit documented workers against undocumented workers, just as they pit white against black. It is always divide to conquer, to keep wages low, fear up, and mis-information and confusion at a high. With international monopoly capitalism desperately attacking the international working class as never before, with prison labor on the rise, privatization and re-gentrification on the rise, they use racialism, i.e., institutionalized racism, especially the criminal unjust system, as a device for the express purpose of maintaining the status quo. We need to teach the history that tells that story, not as apologists who accept the line of the bourgeoisie ruling class, but as revolutionaries who believe in today's future, based on learning from the past experience of history.

The Martin Luther King and Malcolm X We Study Are Not the Same As the Martin Luther King and Malcolm X of Wall Street

When one relies on the ruling class and its agents to certify our history, they will tell it as it benefits Wall Street. They promulgate the idealism that you can "make it" in the system of monopolistic capitalism if you just work harder to further exploit the labor of other working peoples for personal gain. We must understand that the Malcolm X and Martin Luther King we study to advance our goals and objectives are not the same Martin Luther King and Malcolm X as Wall Street's commercial images.

On the political scene, domestically and intercommunalistically, we recognize that the exploiters and oppressors are those who profit from our misery, building more prisons while exporting production, closing schools and health care facilities while they spend our tax money in foreign invasion, war and domination against other working people. This wealthy class of exploiters and international capitalists profiteer on our people and our history through the commercialization of Black History Month – if we allow them to do it.

Our celebration has to be about uniting the many – and that's a broad net, a class-based net – to defeat the few. This is a principle that crosses race, gender, religion and other issues of non-class origin. It will deny the exploiters the ability to divide and conquer the working class as a whole by pitting one group against another, based on false criteria.

To win political solutions we must organize and lead the process of building succinct economies for oppressed people throughout the world who have been denied and deprived of the right to justice, full employment, and health care, among other things. Join us in the struggle.

CCBPP and *The Commemorator* need FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME ORGANIZERS NOW. Volunteers and supporters are also needed to circulate *The Commemorator*, to research, write and edit articles, to organize sponsors and contact community organizations, and to fight for the principles of the Black Panther Party 10-Point Program. Schedule a time to come in for an interview so we can discuss what you can do in our struggle for power and freedom in our communities.

All Power To The People

The views expressed in the bylined editorial and opinion pieces published by The Commemorator *do not necessarily indicate its endorsement or support. — The Editor*

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"SERVING ALL OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES"

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Clifford Cody, Melvin Dickson

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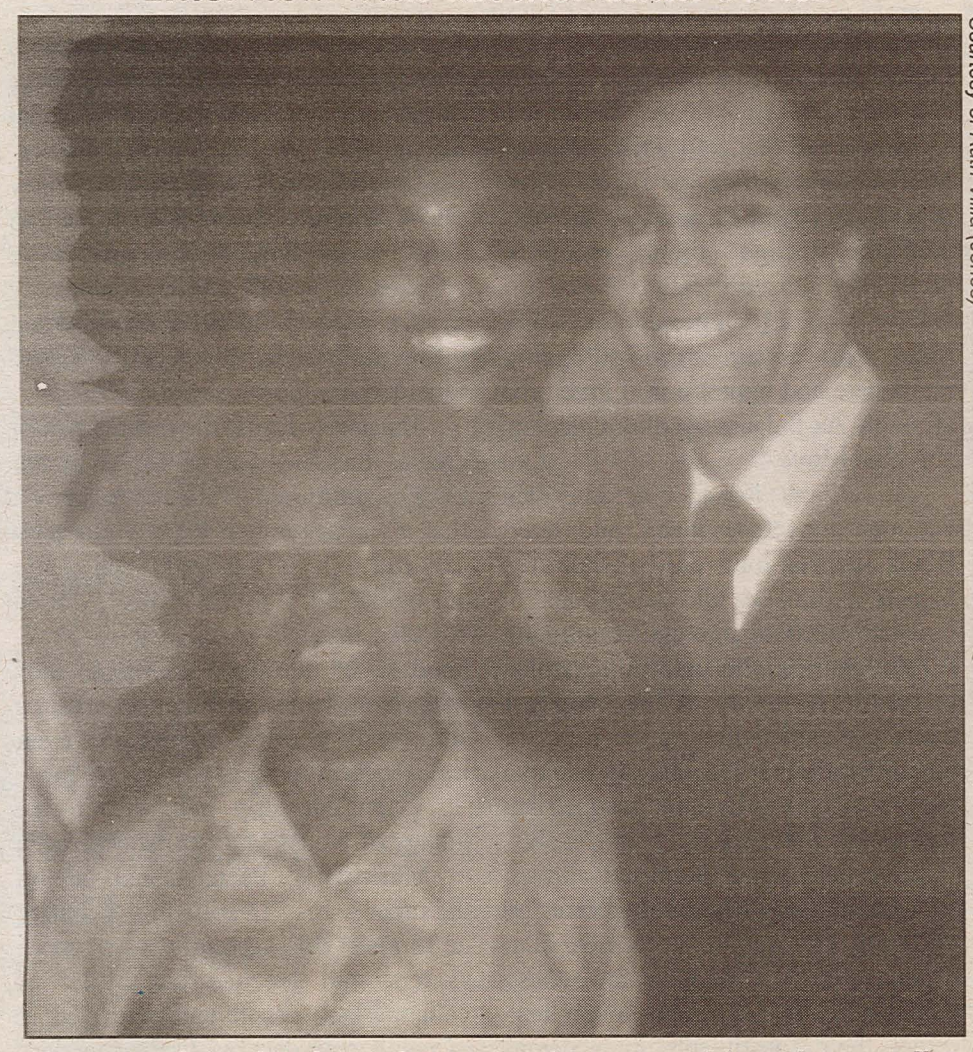
Reflections of a 100 Year-of-Age BPP Activist

Interview with Mother Ruth Jones



Courtesy of Ruth Villia (Jones)

Her steadfast, fearless determination earned her the moniker "Mother of Panthers" when Huey Newton labeled her as a family member, enabling her to attend his trial while thousands waited outside during his trial.

By Jaclyn Waks and Cali Joy Sanchez

Mother Ruth Jones, a stalwart of the Black Panther Party, a permanent fixture in the movement and the legacy, turned 100 years old in July of 2006. During most of those years she has been an activist dedicated to fighting for justice. Her history of involvement in activism began well before the modern civil rights movement had emerged nationally and become popular in the 1960's.

Employed as a social worker, a full time mother, an active member of Glide Memorial Church, a Girl Scout troop leader, a preacher and a tireless activist for change, as well as the lead member of The Panther's Seniors Safe Environment Program, Mother Ruth kept busy on all fronts.

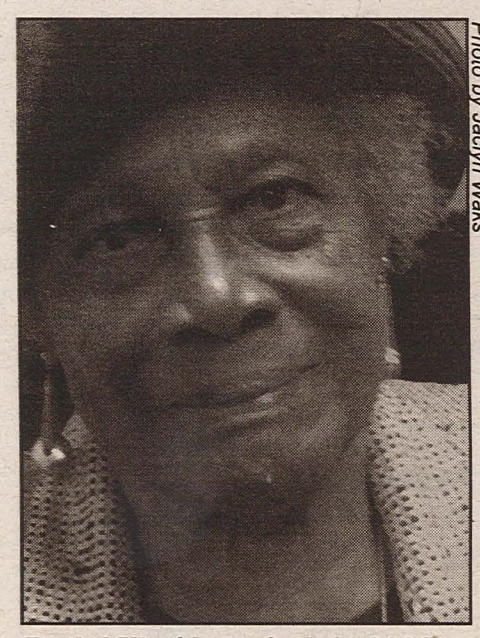


Photo by Jaclyn Waks

Ruth Villa (Jones), July 2006, at San Francisco's Glide Memorial Church.

Mother Ruth and her family first moved to West Oakland in the early 1920's, to 32nd and San Pablo Ave: Originally from Plaquemine, Louisiana, just across the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge, Mother Ruth first came to Oakland with her older brother and they initially stayed with an older sister that was already living in the area. With the building of the Southern Pacific Rail Road, Mother Ruth's entire family decided to relocate here. With nine brothers and four sisters the family decided to move. Mother Ruth's father moved here first with her nine brothers and took a job cooking for the railroad company, traveling with them everywhere. Her mother moved here soon afterwards with the rest of the girls. Taking care of fourteen children was a full-time, stay-at-home job for her mother, while her father became a minister and teacher.

When we spoke with her, Mother Ruth Jones stood silhouetted by the afternoon light, in front of the large picture window of her 10th floor apartment, smiling and remembering back in the day. "See that building over there? That's where Huey and all of them would meet. They would always look up here and wave to me, and then later they would come over and bring me coffee, donuts and something to eat." Pointing back to the mustard colored building outside her window she continued, "They would meet there everyday and get their assignments. I'd watch the young kids go sell their newspapers. But they put a stop to that, you know?"

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Book Review

A Hunt For Truth A Lioness Observance

Photo by Nia Imara

Elbert "Big Man" Howard (center) flanked by Kathleen Cleaver (l) and Angela Davis (r) at the BPP 40th Anniversary in Oakland, California.

Panther On The Prowl

by Elbert "Big Man" Howard

A synopsis of his life and his autobiography

By Kay_C Allen

Panther on the Prowl is a self-collection of the memories and journeys of Elbert "Big Man" Howard, one of the founding members of the Black Panther Party (BPP). Big Man was born in 1938 in Chattanooga, Tennessee, a traditional southern state. Whereas his father died when he was two, Big Man was nurtured in the arms of his mother and extended family including aunts, cousins, and a particular Uncle Walter who served as a surrogate father and mentor. "Uncle Walter taught me just about everything," he said.

Unknown to him at the time, even as a young child Big Man seemed destined to play a pivotal role in history. The neighborhood convenience store where Big Man and his family shopped at frequently belonged to a woman whose son Big Man played with. His name was Gene Roberts, a future FBI agent who also played a role in BPP history, and who subsequently returned to become the mayor of Chattanooga[1].

As an only child faced with a sick mother and the reality of an unsupportive, prejudicial social system, Big Man decided to leave school before his senior year and join the United States Air Force, which promised a steady check to send home to his mother. Big Man served in the Air Force from 1956-1960 where he was exposed to, but never succumbed to, the plague of racism. Prior to being sworn in at the induction center, he recalls that all the white enlistees slept in a hotel while the future Black soldiers walked from the bus station to an elderly Black man's house to spend the night.

Big Man offers a glimpse of a Black soldier's tight-rope balancing act between race and patriotism: In Atlanta, he was denied entrance to a movie theater. As a kid he had learned to be cautious around white people; however, the white soldier he was hanging out with refused to go watch the movie without Elbert. This feeling of interracial class solidarity was a recurring theme in Big Man's life.

After leaving the Air Force, Big Man settled in Oakland, California. His decision to enlist in the Air Force proved life changing, because with the money he earned, he enrolled in Grove Street Community College. There he met Huey Newton and Bobby Seale. Big Man's mind thirsted for knowledge regarding political and/or Black history; he studied Malcolm X, W.E.B. Dubois, Che Guevara, and Ho Chi Minh, to name a few. One night, after the Oakland police arrested Big Man for being double parked while not saying a word to white citizens parked the same way, joining the newly born Black Panther Party became more enticing. The obviously gross and unjust manner with which the police initiated the situation, coupled with the way the judge later on publicly stated that Big Man was probably guilty BEFORE evidence was presented, drew him closer to the BPP and the astute legal mind of Dr. Huey P. Newton.

Anger started to set in. This incident, along with countless others inflicted upon Blacks, was the reason the Black Panthers called for an end to police brutality (BPP Program Point #7). Big Man harnessed his anger by policing the police during neighborhood watches. He began carrying a shotgun per BPP's self-defense policy toward police harassment and violence and even gave a shotgun to young, courageous Li'l Bobby Hutton, the first member of the BPP. It would be the last gun Li'l Bobby Hutton possessed; police murdered him the next day. Li'l Bobby Hutton was 17. To this day, Big Man laments the decision of giving Li'l Bobby a gun that night:

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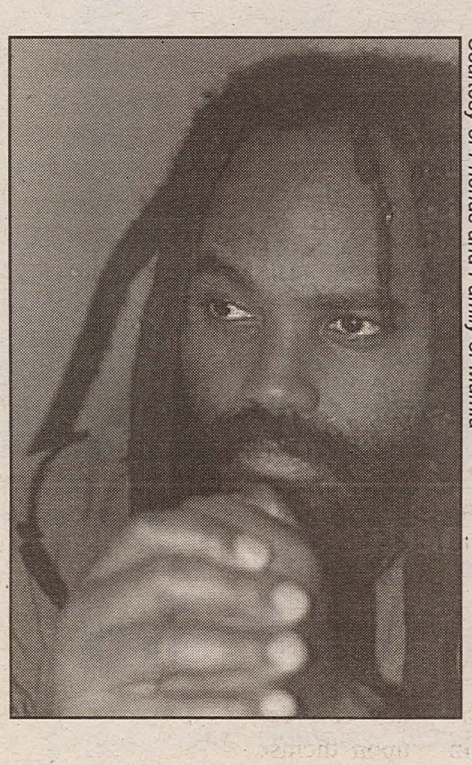
Mumia Update

Freiheit fur Mumia Abu-Jamal!

German book reveals new evidence in death-row case



Courtesy of Friends and Family of Mumia

By Hans Bennett

Editor's note: *Hans Bennett is a Philadelphia-based photojournalist who has been documenting the movement to free Mumia Abu-Jamal and all political prisoners for over five years.*

*This review is based on both his reading of the unpublished English language version of "*Race Against Death*" and recent interview with its author, Michael Schiffmann.*

"The history of the criminal case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, which is by now almost 25 years old, has been characterized by bias right from the start: against a black man whom the court denied a jury of his peers, against a member of the economic underclass who did not have a real claim to a qualified defense, and against a radical, whose allegedly dangerous militancy obliged the state to eliminate him from the ranks of society."

So writes German author Michael Schiffmann in his new book "*Race Against Death. Mumia Abu-Jamal: a Black Revolutionary in White America*" (an expansion of Schiffmann's Ph.D dissertation at the University of Heidelberg), just released in Germany November 2006. The German-language version was recently published in Europe, and the author is currently looking for a publisher for the English-language version of the book.

In 1982, Abu-Jamal was convicted of killing white Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner and sentenced to death in a trial that Amnesty International has declared a "violation of minimum international standards that govern fair trial procedures and the use of the death penalty."

Schiffmann writes that a third person (not Abu-Jamal or his brother Billy Cook) most likely shot and killed Faulkner on the morning of Dec. 9, 1981. This third person was Kenneth Freeman (Billy Cook's friend and business partner), who — according to the available evidence — was a passenger in Cook's car. Freeman likely shot him in response to Faulkner's shooting Abu-Jamal in the chest, and was therefore the black male that six eyewitnesses reported to have seen fleeing the scene moments before other police arrived.

"Race Against Death" asserts that ballistics almost certainly rule out Abu-Jamal's firing the first shot (into Faulkner's back), and that much evidence shows that he also didn't fire the lethal bullet to Faulkner's head. However, in the very unlikely scenario that Abu-Jamal did shoot Faulkner, it would have been a response to being shot himself and would therefore be justified self-defense.

MIT Professor Noam Chomsky (a long-time supporter of Abu-Jamal) writes that Schiffmann's "careful and scrupulous inquiry into the events and the available evidence brings to light much that is new or was obscured," and "raises understanding of this painful and critically important case to a new level. Not only his comprehensive research, but also his penetrating evaluation of the background and import, should be the basis for further engagement in the case itself and the intricate array of issues in which it is embedded."

Building upon evidence presented in the other two books written about Abu-Jamal's case: "*Executing Justice*" (Dan Williams, 2001) and "*Killing Time*" (Dave Lindorff, 2003), Schiffmann boldly presents both new evidence and an entirely original analysis of previous ballistics evidence.

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Letter To The Editor

Crooked Faces

By Jamal Hart

Dear Editor,

I greet all that refuse this injustice of Black oppression that roguely continue to run rampant towards the people to encage them mentally, physically and politically. Peace and solidarity to all supporters and comrades who remain steadfast against racist hate and oppression, I greet you all with As-Salaam Alaikum, Hotep, and Ona Move.

To all my loving comrades that continue to refuse invert and overt Black oppression, police brutality, racism and unlawful convictions of innocent freedom fighters who remain revolutionaries who fight on all fronts to restore humanity of the people, I thank you for continuing the fight for our liberation from this destructive system of corruption and gangsterism on a whole other level.

Comrades from here and abroad, we must expose these crooked faces by unifying our people with boycotts, walkouts, union strikes and force these public officials that mendaciously represent their constituents in a demagogue manner to finally do what's right. We must address these issues and not turn away from focusing our views as a whole to establish the needed support base in the city of Brotherly Love.

The adversaries against Mumia Abu-Jamal continue to manipulate their prestigious positions by fictitiously vilifying this international movement with a bogus resolution, namely H. Con. Resolution Bill 407. This venomous resolution is being spearheaded by Crooked Faces Congressman Michael G. Fitzpatrick and Congresswoman Allison Y. Schwartz. If you ask me, it needs to be publicly banned.

For these people to actually combine forces against our well-supported St. Denis France comrades, we must stand in solidarity to expose the vicious acts these unsavory savages wish to dupe and manipulate the masses with. This will show our comrades worldwide that no matter what, this revolution will not rest until my beloved father Mumia Abu-Jamal is exonerated from this known government frame-up. If there are still any questions surrounding this matter, I have one of my own: Why are these mendacious courthouses continuing to hide the truth that Arnold Beverly has confessed to the killing of Daniel Faulkner? Well, simply put, Mumia has accumulated massive support on a worldwide scale and gaining more everyday. It's a clear indication that the people are correct and the government's deluded position is clearly 100% wrong. When it is proven to show their complete error, these crooked faces will continue to display to the masses falsified manipulated information from that racially biased Philadelphia FOP website.

Because of this, they immediately created the diversion of the "Wag the Dog" syndrome. When one knows that it's possible that the devious ploy can and will be exposed, such a vile act would not only be against Mumia but also humanity. Then their livelihood is in question, therefore, they will viciously and maliciously create a strategy to confuse disrupt and even inflame the situation.

I am currently held within the gulags of North America, specifically, in Minersville, Pennsylvania behind the razor wires. Despite this, I continue to resist this vermin legal injustice system that leeches the blood of valiant Black people and other people of color everyday by displaying government operated terror amongst them. Whereas, the minds of many Africans enslaved in America has been duped to believe that injustice to one is justice to all just like some believe that the predators of the Transatlantic Slave Trade were perhaps an exaggerated myth or somewhat fable and not crooked faces of deception. I believe Africans enslaved their brethren because of lost hope. On both sides of the coin, they both lost in the end.

Black oppression has been running rampant on us as a whole due to many crooked faces and disguises of rogue police officers, racist prison guards, arbitrary biased employers and a mendacious justice system of corruption. I say abolish this racist death penalty, stop police brutality, and ban this racially motivated H. Con. Resolution Bill 407 immediately! There won't be any blue skies if we as a people continue to neglect our given strength of unifying as one force to free the wrongfully convicted in this struggle.

This movement is designed to move the people to take a stand against blatant racist acts that consume our leaders of today to yesterday's conditions and circumstances. We will not stand by and allow such a vile, vicious biased legal system to abuse the rights of our innocent and

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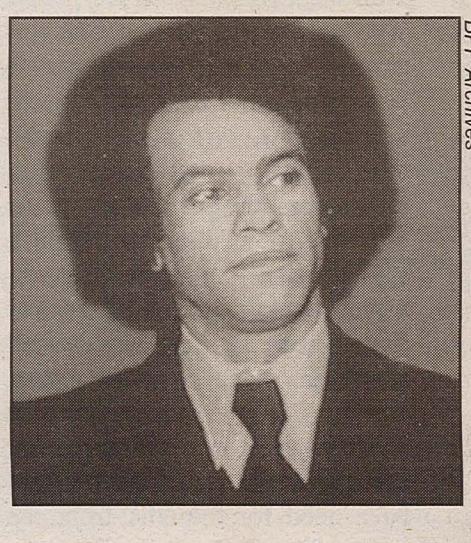
Archives

The War Against the Panther

CONCLUSION

Huey's Corner



BPP Archives

Editor's note: *This is the final piece from his 1977 dissertation for the History of Consciousness program at the University of California Santa Cruz. The thesis "The War Against the Panther: A Study of Repression in America," was published as a book by the Huey P. Newton Foundation (Writers and Readers, 1999). The book is available at your local bookstore or directly from Huey P. Newton Foundation. The conclusion is the last excerpt from the book and it sums up the book.*

The foregoing actions undertaken by just three agencies of the federal government against the Black Panther Party illustrate not only the nature and extent of tactics the government will employ to crush dissident groups, but the seriousness with which the party was perceived as a potential threat to those in power. There is no dispute that the Party suffered from more hostile and severe government acts directed against it than any domestic political organization in the twentieth century, including the Communist Party.

While the FBI rationalized that it took these "neutralizing" steps against the BPP in order to curb it's violent propensities, the truth is that what the Bureau felt most "threatening" were survival programs providing free breakfast to school children and other constructive services.[1] No single feature of the Panthers made them so feared or disliked by the government; many organizations possessed either a revolutionary ideology, community service, or willingness to engage in legal struggle to achieve their goals. It was the combination of all these features, pitched to a group that had been historically and systemically excluded from full participation in democratic capitalist America, that made the party different, and dangerously so.

Not surprisingly, many of the tactics worked, in the sense that the Party lost members, leaders, and supporters (financially and otherwise). Reports of the BPP's demise, though, have always been premature. Of equal importance is the claimed halt to these practices by the government once they had been publicly exposed. The COINTELPRO was officially terminated "for security reasons" in 1971, though the Bureau continues many of the same activities under different rubrics. Instead of recanting the obvious abuses it engaged in, the FBI, through Director Clarence Kelley, proclaimed that "for the FBI to have done less under the circumstances would have been an abdication of its responsibilities to the American people."[2]

A more apologetic tone was struck by the IRS when, on August 9th 1973, Commissioner Donald Alexander announced that the special services (SS) group would be abolished.

He stated that "political or social views, 'extremist' or otherwise, are irrelevant to taxation."[3] Once again, however, the function of the SS group merely transferred to the Intelligence Division of the IRS.[4]

The CIA responded to revelations about it's unlawful domestic counterintelligence operations by destroying documents, rationalizing its activities as necessary for national security, and, ultimately, asking for a new charter that would, under the extraordinary conditions supposedly existing in the 1960's, permit CIA intervention in limited situations.

The danger inherent to democracy in any official abuse of constitutional rights of a minority is, to be sure, always theoretically recognized:

"Getting racketeers on a VA [Veterans Administration] application is like getting Civil Rights workers for speeding," says Howard Glickstein, who was in the Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice [under Robert Kennedy]. This time it's the Mafioso, but next time it could be the Black Panthers or Goldwater supporters.[5]

The gap between theory and practice is, however, rarely closed; witness the history of American Indians, the Communist Party, and the Wobblies.[6] What closed this gap and temporarily saved the Party from political annihilation was the publicly revealed expansion of some of these reprehensible tactics to traditionally accepted power groups and their leaders. This is, as an eminent constitutional scholar has noted, an almost inevitable result.

> The controls and apparatus necessary for the restriction of associational expression — investigations, files, informers, constant surveillance — are incompatible with a free society. Restriction of associational expression is likely to become, in practice, an effort to suppress a whole social or political movement. History and experience warn us that such attempts are usually futile and merely tend to obscure the real grievances which society must, if it is to survive, face squarely and solve.[7]

The veracity of the above observation is provided by the case history of the war against the Panthers. The original White House "Enemies List" contained but a few names and the SS group within the IRS began by focusing on twenty-two organizations. Both were soon added to the Administration and included liberals within the Republican Party as well as leaders of labor, business, academia, and, as the Watergate break-in revealed, even the Democratic National Headquarters. This transference of hostile and illegal government actions from organizations, which pose fundamental challenge to the prevailing order to groups not ideologically at odds with democratic capitalism, was certainly related to the period of the 1960's. The anti-war movement coalesced or at least intersected and occasionally joined, with the civil rights, Black community, and student movements to worry those who saw their role as "maintaining the existence of social order, and… combating those who threaten that order."[8] Yet these circumstances are not so unique as to defy repetition or at least the perception of the same by "Federal law enforcement officers [who] look upon themselves as guardians of the status quo." [9] Should this happen, there is, as former Senator Sam Ervin acknowledged, "no real assurance that these programs would not be resumed."[10] That the "existing social order" will be threatened again is certain; the real question is what will be the future results. Fear that these agencies would in fact be far more dangerous without some constraints than those groups and individuals they surveil has led to legislation and higher governmental discussion about the FBI, the CIA, and other intelligence agencies fostered by them.

Revelations of extensive governmental misconduct in the Watergate affair and widespread charges of illegal FBI and CIA spying on Americans in violation of law, existing charters, and the Constitution caused the U.S. Senate to establish a special Select Committee "to study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities" in 1975. Prior to that time, White House administrations and the intelligence agencies had succeeded in stopping all attempts to create Congressional intelligence committees to share oversight powers with Appropriations and Armed Services Committees which had only minimal supervision over the agencies.[11]

The task of the Senate Select Committee (better known as the Church Committee after it's chairman, Senator Frank Church of Idaho) was to determine "the extent, if any, to which illegal, improper, or unethical activities were engaged in" by the intelligence agencies. The Select Committee was also authorized to investigate specific charges of illegal domestic surveillance by the CIA, domestic intelligence and counterintelligence operations carried out against Americans by the FBI, and the origins and implementation of the Huston Plan.[12]

Continued on page 6

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Huey's Corner

Continued from page 5

When the Select Committee issued its Final Report on April 23, 1976, it had constructed a documented record of abuse that was far more extensive than that which was known or even imagined when the investigation began.

We have seen segments of our Government adopt tactics unworthy of a democracy and occasionally reminiscent of the tactics of totalitarian regimes.[13]

Specifically criticizing the FBI COINTELPRO operation, the Select Committee said:

…the chief investigative branch of the Federal Government [FBI], which was charged by law with investigating crimes and preventing criminal conduct itself, engaged in lawless tactics and responded to deep-seated social problems by fomenting violence and unrest. [14]

After concluding its work, the Senate Select Committee unanimously recommended that Congress develop and enact a comprehensive intelligence charter to curb and control intelligence activities and create a body of statutory law that would prevent future intelligence abuses:

> The Committee is not satisfied with the position that mere exposure of what has occurred in the past will prevent its recurrence. Clear legal standards and effective oversight and controls are necessary to ensure that domestic intelligence activity does not itself undermine the democratic system it is intended to protect.[15]

In March 1976 the Senate created a permanent Select Committee on Intelligence. In February 1978 the Committee introduced S. B. 2525, the "National Intelligence Reorganization Act of 1978." In the House of Representatives, a counterpart bill, H.R. 11245, was introduced.

S.B. 2525/H.R. 11245 included many of the Church Committee recommendations, but also contained numerous proposals at odds with those recommendations. For example, the legislation authorized the CIA to investigate Americans overseas under a non-criminal code of "clandestine intelligence activity." It included powers to engage in certain COINTELPRO types of activities, including violations of law and the use of counter-espionage to prevent violence. Although the bill established judicial warrants for wiretapping and break-ins, it authorized judges to issue warrants for intelligence break-ins in instances of less than probable cause to believe a crime had been or was about to be committed.[16]

Following strong opposition from the intelligence agencies and their supporters in Congress, S.B. 2525/H.R.11245 died at the end of 1978 and was not reintroduced in 1979. Then, on January 23, 1980, President Carter in his State of the Union message called for removing "unwarranted restraints" on the CIA. Describing the effect and importance of Carter's remark, David Wise, co-author of *The Invisible Government* and author of *The American Police State*, said:

> In that brief moment, one could easily visualize the agency rising from the ashes of intelligence reform. The CIA's timing is flawless. In the present hawkish atmosphere in Washington, intelligence reform has become almost a dirty word, an X-rated idea whose time has come — and probably gone.[17]

On February 8, 1980, S. B. 2284/H.R. 6588, the "National Intelligence Act of 1980," was introduced in Congress as the successor to the 1978 "National Intelligence Reorganization and Reform Act." The name change was fitting because reform has been eliminated from major parts of the legislation.

The new bill:

1. Authorized counter-intelligence and counter-terrorism investigations directed against Americans at home and abroad under non-criminal, broad standards.

2. Permitted the use of informants and undercover agents in groups suspected of criminal activity.

3. Authorized unspecified COINTELPRO techniques against any American suspected of participating in secret intelligence activity or who might threaten to engage in violent activity for political motive.

4. Established court warrants for national security mail opening and physical searches in the United States directed at Americans, under guidelines of less than probable cause to believe a crime is involved and without requiring notice to the person(s) or group(s) who are subjects of the search.

5. Failed to provide a mechanism for citizens whose civil liberties have been violated to seek redress. [18]

As did its predecessor, S.B. 2284/H.R. 6588 met opposition from the intelligence agencies, some members of Congress, and the Carter Administration. Consequently, on April 18, 1980, the Senate Intelligence Committee moved to abandon charter "reform" for the CIA and immediately held legislative sessions on "an abbreviated new proposal." The Committee said it would not hold hearings on the substitute for fear that any further debate would prevent the bill from being enacted this year.[19] The following day, April 19, the Committee agreed to drop its previous demand for prior Congressional notice of all CIA covert operations. [20]

The shortened S.B. 2284, which was described by some in the news media as a compromise, was approved by the Senate Intelligence Committee on May 8, 1980. The bill established a broad Congressional right to monitor the nation's intelligence activities, focusing mainly on the oversight of the CIA. The revised S.B. 2284 provides the Senate and House Intelligence Committees with the sole authority to oversee the intelligence community, in effect repealing the Hughes-Ryan Amendment of 1974 that allowed eight Congressional Committees to hear reports on covert activities. The bill also creates a complex reporting procedure that requires the President to keep the two committees "fully and currently" informed of a wide variety of activities. However, the legislation recognizes and encourages the declaration of an inherent Presidential right to avoid such reporting in some situations. [21]

Senator Edward Kennedy has introduced legislation called the "FBI Charter," S. B. 1612/H.R. 5030. There is considerable debate by civil liberties groups as to whether S. B. 1612 will prevent future COINTELPRO types of actions by the FBI or whether it would, in fact, authorize the Bureau legally to carry out activities that were formerly illegal. The bill:

1. Authorizes FBI investigations of terrorism, defined as acts of violence..

2. Outlaws investigations of individuals and organizations solely because of their political or religious views.

3. Permits wiretapping, mail opening, and the use of undercover agents under certain circumstances.

4. Permits the use of journalists, clergymen, and others as informants who, although they cannot initiate crimes, can participate in crimes to protect their "covers."

5. Provides new FBI exemptions from the Freedom of Information Act, including a statutory ban on the release of the names of FBI informants.

6. Permits increased access to credit and insurance records of citizens, without securing subpoenas.

7. Fails to provide a mechanism for citizens whose civil liberties have been violated to seek redress.[22]

Due to the current 1980 Presidential election campaign, no action has yet been taken on S.B.1612/H.R. 5030. Lobbying efforts, however, continue (see, e.g., Appendix D.)

With the CIA "unleashed" and the possibility that the Kennedy bill, if enacted, will do the same for the FBI, it would seem that the actions described in this study by government agencies to destroy the Black Panther Party and other dissident groups may, in the future, become entrenched in the U.S. Government. Tom Wicker has noted that the new CIA charter will more than ever make the agency into an "invisible government."[23] Former CIA agent Philip Agee, who is now literally a man without a country because of his public revelations of illegal CIA activities, has uncovered the core of the problem surrounding CIA abuses, actions that can be equally applied to the FBI and other intelligence agencies:

> . . . the main concern is not really with the CIA but with the people who run the U.S. — the CIA acts as their instrument — these are the people who run the multinational corporations, who own the banks, who control the traditional political process, the professionals who service all of them and the military-industrial interlock. This relatively small group of people have a need for the CIA and what it's been doing over the years. And until changes occur in the U.S .in terms of political power and economic control, there will be a need for the CIA from the point of view of this small minority.[24]

The philosopher George Santayana warned, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." If illegal government abuses as have occurred in the past against the Black Panther Party and other dissident groups are legalized in the future, as now seems likely, the western world will not be "safe for democracy."

1 See pp.108-113

2 Testimony of Clarence M. Kelley, Director, FBI (U.S. Congress. House. Committee on the Judiciary. Hearings before a Subcommittee on Civil Rights and Constitutional Rights (November 20, 1974) 93rd Cong., 2nd sess., 1974, PP. 44-45. Kelley also stated his "feeling that the FBI's counterintelligence programs had an impact on the crises of the time and therefore, that they helped to bring about a favorable change in this country." Testimony of Clarence M. Kelley, Director, FBI, December 10, 1975 (U.S. Congress. Senate. Select Committee to Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. Hearings, 94th Cong., 1st sess., 1975. Vol. 6. FBI, pp. 283-284.)

3 IRS News Release (IR-1323), August 9, 1973.

4 See pg. 116

5 Victor S. Navasky, Kennedy Justice (New York: Athenaeum, 1971), p. 58. The reference to "getting racketeers on a VA application" is about the "the notorious Louis Gallo and his

Continued on page 15

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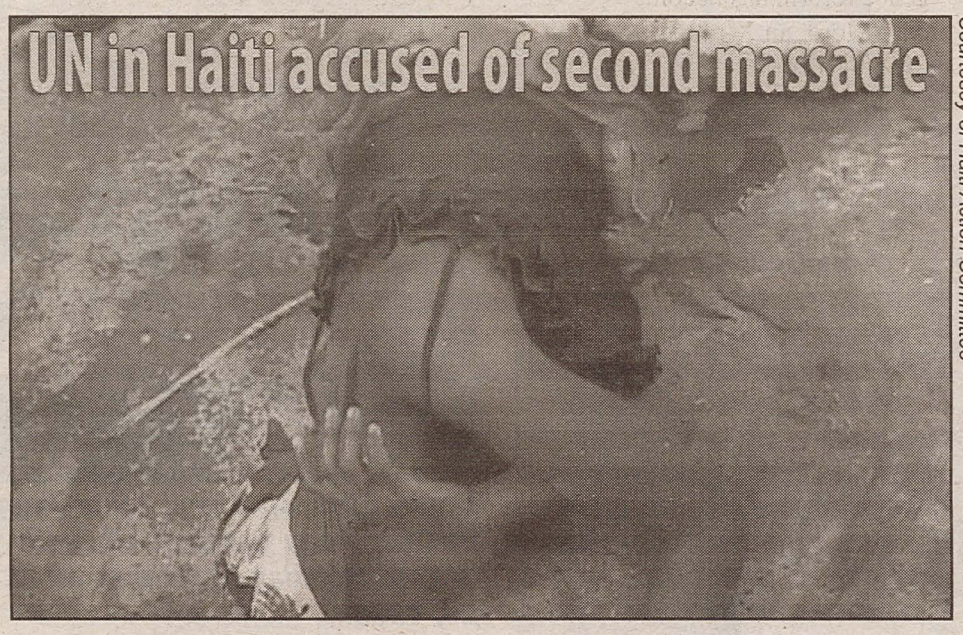
International Update

The Resistance That Will Not Die

By Dave Welsh,
Haiti Action Committee



Courtesey of Haiti Action Committee

• Right-wing death squads, working in tandem with Canadian-trained Haitian Police, continue to ravage with impunity the pro-Lavalas neighborhoods that make up the majority of Haiti's capital city. No one is disarming the death squads or bringing them to justice.

• The 9,000 Brazilian and other U.N. troops and tanks continue to fire heavy weapons into densely populated civilian areas, and U.N. Special Envoy Edmond Mulet has vowed to intensify these operations.

• Residents believe their neighborhoods are targeted because they are considered bastions of support for the Lavalas movement of exiled President Jean-Betrand Aristide.

On September 30, 2006, thousands of democracy activists marched to the US consulate in Port-au-Prince, demanding an end to this reign of terror. Slogans denounced members of the small Haitian elite and their foreign sponsors, in particular the US, France, Canada and Brazil; the ones the marchers hold responsible for what Jamaican writer John Maxwell calls "The Holocaust still under way in Haiti."

The demonstration commemorated the 15th anniversary of the first coup against President Aristide in 1991. It was spearheaded by the September 30th Foundation, an organization of victims of the '91 coup, together with others resisting the 2004 coup and current repression.

The march stepped off from the site of St. Jean Bosco Church where then-Catholic priest, Father Aristide, had ignited a huge mass movement in the 1980's that ended up toppling the Duvalier dictatorship. The march proceeded through the popular districts of Cité Soleil and Bel Air to the city center. They demanded freedom for jailed Lavalas activist Rene Civil, former Parliamentarian Amanus Mayette and all the estimated 1000 political prisoners still in Haiti's jails.

The marchers demanded justice, an end to impunity and an end to the persecution of Lavalas people by the Haititian justice system. Marchers also called for the immediate return of President Aristide. "He is a citizen of Haiti," went one chant. "He doesn't need a U.S. or French visa to return to Haiti." Another chant opposed bringing back the hated Haitian army — disbanded by Aristide in 1995. Many of the police and paramilitaries terrorizing popular neighborhoods today are former military.

A large gathering of protesters also marched in the northern city of Cap Haitien on September 30, chanting "Long Live Aristide!"

Another sign of the Haitians' refusal to accept the imposed "reign of terror" was the triumphal, early September visit to Cité Soleil by So'Anne - her first since her recent release from two years in prison. Tumultuous crowds greeted So'Anne — a grassroots political leader and folksinger — as she toured various neighborhoods within the vast community of Cité Soleil. They were cheering her call for restoring Haiti's sovereignty and democracy.

New Assassinations and Massacres in the Martissant/Grande Ravine District

Between September 24 and 26, 2006, the Little Machete Army — Lame Ti Manchet, a death squad with close ties to the Haitian National Police — went on a three-day killing spree in the Delouis neighborhood; eight were killed, others wounded, Agence Haitienne de Presse (AHP) reported. Deputy Jean Cledor Myril "invited police authorities to shoulder their responsibilities to prevent [them] from continuing to kill, steal and burn." (AHP)

On September 21, community leader Esterne Bruner, who had called for strong action against death squads, was assassinated with gunshots to the face. According to AHP it was the work of the Little Machete Army. Mr. Bruner, a father of six and coordinator of the Grande Ravine Community Human Rights Council, had been working to get help and justice for victims of July 6-7, 2006 massacre in Grand Ravine.

On the night of July 6-7, a group of heavily armed men, including Lame Ti Manchet, massacred at least 22 people — five of them children — wounded some 25 and burned 20 homes in Grande Ravine. The names of the dead are documented, as are the names of many of the people who are well known to the townspeople of Grande Ravine and well known to the police.

One eight-year-old girl told a Haiti Action Committee (HAC) delegation last August that she lost both her parents in the massacre. Esterne Bruner, who had taken over care of the little girl as her guardian after the death of her parents, was himself killed barely two months later.

UN troops from Sri Lanka, UN police from Nigeria and Haitian police are all stationed in the hillside community. But residents told the HAC delegation that these armed, uniformed "peacekeepers" have shown no interest in bringing the killers to justice.

Martissant was the scene of the police-orchestrated "soccer field massacre" before 5,000 witnesses on August 20, 2005, during a soccer game organized by the US Government agency USAID. Police chef Mario Andresol admitted — during an October 2005 interview with the Commission of Inquiry — that the original police plan was to seize Lavalas activists at half-time as they were pointed out by police informants. At a signal from inspector Jean-Michel Yves Gaspard, police opened fire on the soccer fans, as TV cameras rolled.

The Little Machete Army, carrying machetes distributed earlier by police, then moved through the crowd, hacking to death those fingered as Lavalas, while UN troops, stationed close by the soccer field, did nothing. The next day, the Little Machete Army returned to terrorize Grande Ravine, burning down houses including the shop of community teacher Esterne Bruner.

A police investigation documented involvement of 20 police officers in the Soccer Field Massacre and 15 of them were arrested. But by March 2006 all police had been exonerated and freed.

Intensified UN Military Operations - Neighborhoods under Lockdown

Incursions by MINUSTAH (UN occupation forces) and shootings happen every day now in Lavalas strongholds like Cité Soleil. UN tanks rumble down the streets of these crumbling districts like they own the place. Sandbagged bunkers bristling with barbed wire — with machine guns pointing out nervously at the civilians walking by — conjure up televised images of other occupations, such as Palestine or Iraq.

On August 24, an International Human Rights Delegation witnessed at close range an attack by " peacekeepers" on the community of Simond Pele, in Cité Soleil. Brazilian MINUSTAH troops in four tanks pumped multiple rounds of heavy caliber ammunition into houses in this densely populated residential area. The only other presence seen on the streets were unarmed civilians, including small children.

A young man, Wildert Samedy, 19, was killed in the assault, while he was on the roof fixing a radio antenna. This followed a series of deadly Brazilian attacks in Simond Pele. While the delegation was in Simond Pele, a UN dump truck and bulldozer arrived, dumping a load of dirt to block one of the entrances to the neighborhood. A resident noted

Continued on page 13

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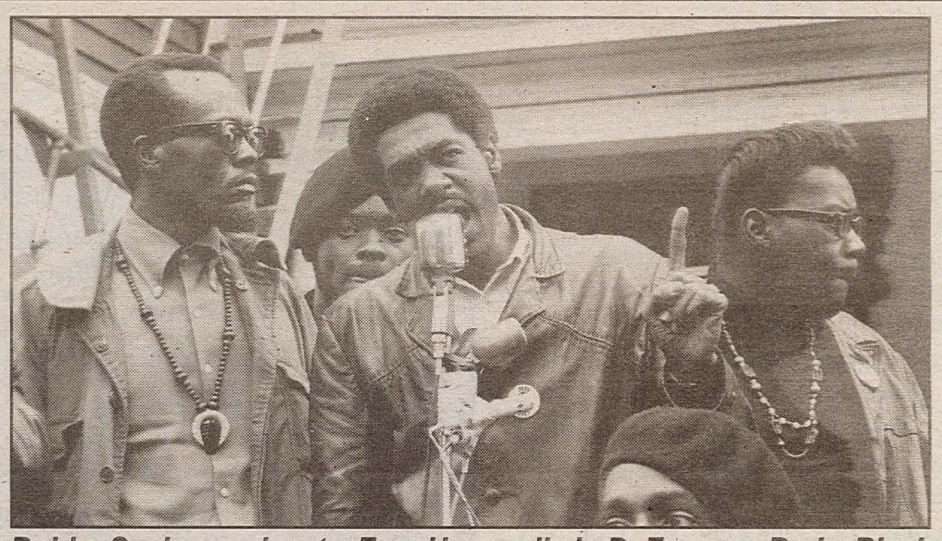
Artist Corner

The Black Panthers by Stephen Shames

Photos by Stephen Shames

People's Free Food Program, Palo Alto, California, 1972



Bobby Seale speaks at a Free Huey rally in DeFremery Park. Black Panther Party Captain Bill Brent (l). Black Panther Party Captain Wilford Holliday (r) (known as "Captain Crutch"), Oakland, July 29, 1968.

Stephen Shames, an award winning photographer, author of *The Black Panthers*

"With this historic book, Stephen Shames provides powerful and poignant images of the most courageous group of young black people ever organized in America — The Black Panther Party. Thank God for them — and Stephen Shames!"

— Cornell West, University Professor of Religion, Princeton University.

The Commemorator wishes to congratulate an award winning photographer, Stephen Shames on this extraordinary new book, *The Black Panthers* (Aperture, October 2006) that has captured, through his unique display of images of the activities of the Black Panther Party (BPP) members and the communities it organized from 1967 - 1973, the dynamic, powerful and historic work of the BPP.

"It is a very poignant piece," said Melvin Dickson, Chairman of the Committee to Commemorate the Black Panther Party. "It provides a broader picture of the life and struggles of the BPP than other collections of photos we have seen because it shows work being done in places in the East as well as the West and other parts of the country. Most things published about the group focus on activities in the Bay Area and Oakland."

The Black Panthers has taken almost forty years to be signed with a publisher and printed. Shames explained the reason for the long time it took in his preface to the book. "In 1970, a major American publisher agreed to publish my photographs of The Black Panther Party. That year, my wife Phyllis and I drove cross-country, photographing party chapters along the way in Los Angeles, Chicago, Toledo, Philadelphia, and Boston, finally arriving in New York, ready to meet with my editor and sign the book contract. However, the contract negotiations did not go smoothly; the publisher disputed every detail of the proposed agreement. This carried on for days. Finally, my editor revealed to me that Spiro Agnew, Vice President under Richard Nixon, played golf with the chairman of the company. During a recent game Vice President Agnew had told his buddy that the administration did not want these photographs published, and my editor was fired for signing the book.

"Set on getting the book published, I made the rounds for two years, approaching a number of publishers, but nobody would touch the material — until now."

The publication date coincided with the 2006 Black Panther Party's 40th Anniversary.

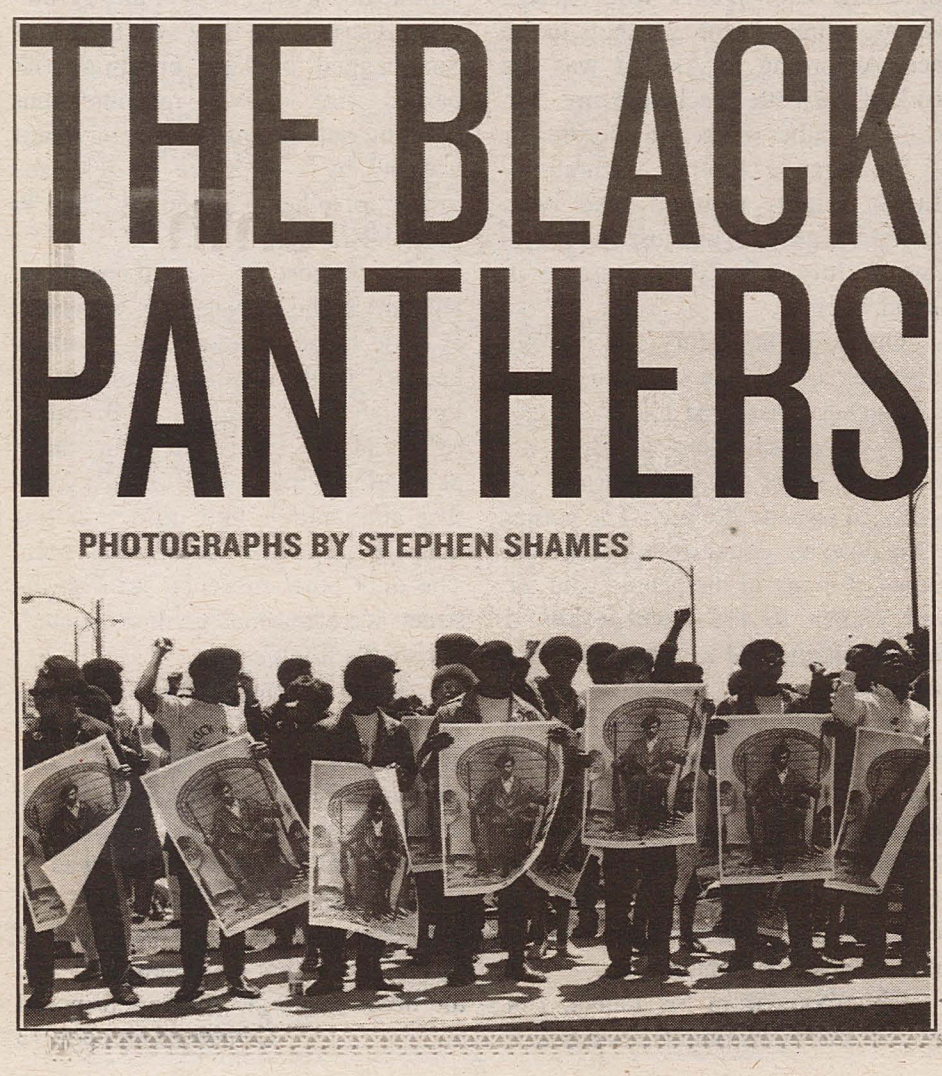
The Black Panthers is a compilation of photographs by Stephen Shames, with essays by Panther Party Co-founder Bobby Seale and scholar Charles E. Jones.

Shames further explains in his preface the unique relationship he had with the Black Panthers that enabled him to photograph both the public and the intimate moments. "...my story of the Panthers is also one of my relationship with Bobby Seale. Bobby brought me into the Party and would become my mentor, my surrogate dad. I spent many hours with him and later with Huey P. Newton after he was released from jail. I was close to them and to many Party members such as Elbert 'Big Man' Howard as well as William 'Billy X' Jennings, who helped put this book together.

"Because of my close relationship, I was granted unusual access. I was the only photographer allowed in

Continued on page 13

Kathleen Cleaver (far left), Communications Secretary for the Black Panther Party, talks with other party members before a Free Huey rally in DeFremery Park. At far right (face cut off) is Joan Tarika Lewis, the first woman to join the party, Oakland, 1968.



Artist Corner
PUBLIC ENEMY

Public Enemy featuring PARIS: Rebirth of a Nation

By Monique Code

March 7th was the day you could open up the window of hip hop and allow fresh air to come in. March 7th was a day of liberation also. Why? PE's new CD "*Rebirth of a Nation*" was released. If I could rate this CD on a scale of 1 to 10 stars, I could keep on counting the stars. There aren't enough stars to rate this one. That's how good it is.

This is a special project because not only does it unite great quality talent from the East Coast like Immortal Technique and dead prez with quality talent from the West Coast like Kam, the Conscious Daughters and MC Ren, Paris, the Black Panther of hip hop, produced and wrote the CD. WOW! That's a lot of talent!

I've been asked which songs really stick out in my mind. My response has been: Where do you want me to start? From the first track called Raw S@*! to the last track which is a remix of Field Nigga Boogie from Paris' 2003 hot release Sonic Jihad, each song is packed with energy, motivation to action and empowerment to love yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually. It also contains a special song dedicated to our people in the Gulf Coast who are STILL hurting from the wrath of Hurricane Katrina.

However, if I had to narrow down my favorites on the CD, it would be the following in no specific order: Rise, Can't Hold Us Back, Plastic Nation and Coinsequences. Rise has a funky beat that makes you want to dance and take action to teach our people to resist the system and demand change. Can't Hold Us Back is an anthem of motivation and empowerment to make a difference in the world and in your own life. Plastic Nation discusses the obsession of plastic surgery and to love yourself for whom God created you to be. Coinsequences asks the question of why our youth are being dumbed down and easily distracted by the disgusting images they see on TV and the garbage they hear on the radio thanks to these corporations who don't care about them at all.

Your intelligence will not be insulted when you pick up this masterpiece. If anything, it will enlighten you to learn more about current affairs surrounding this world with a critical eye and to love the person you look at in the mirror each and everyday.

I highly recommend this CD to Hard Truth Soldiers only. If you really want to know why there's a poison goin' on, grab this CD as fast as you can. You can log on to Paris' website www.guerrillafunk.com to retrieve it. While on the website, read the valuable and insightful information on it and enhance your library by reading some of the books recommended by the Guerrilla Funk family.

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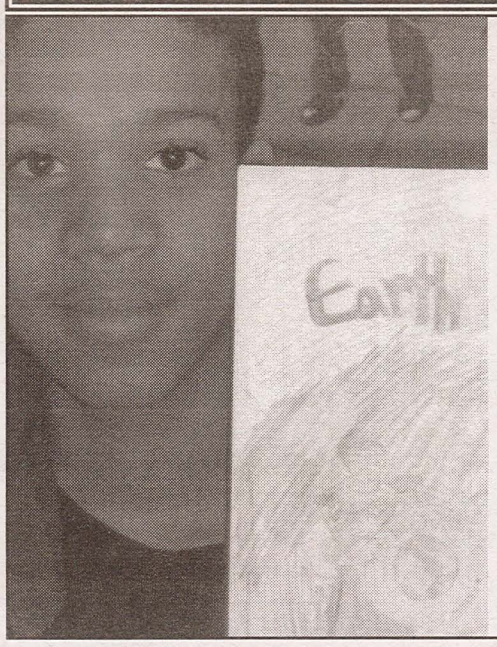
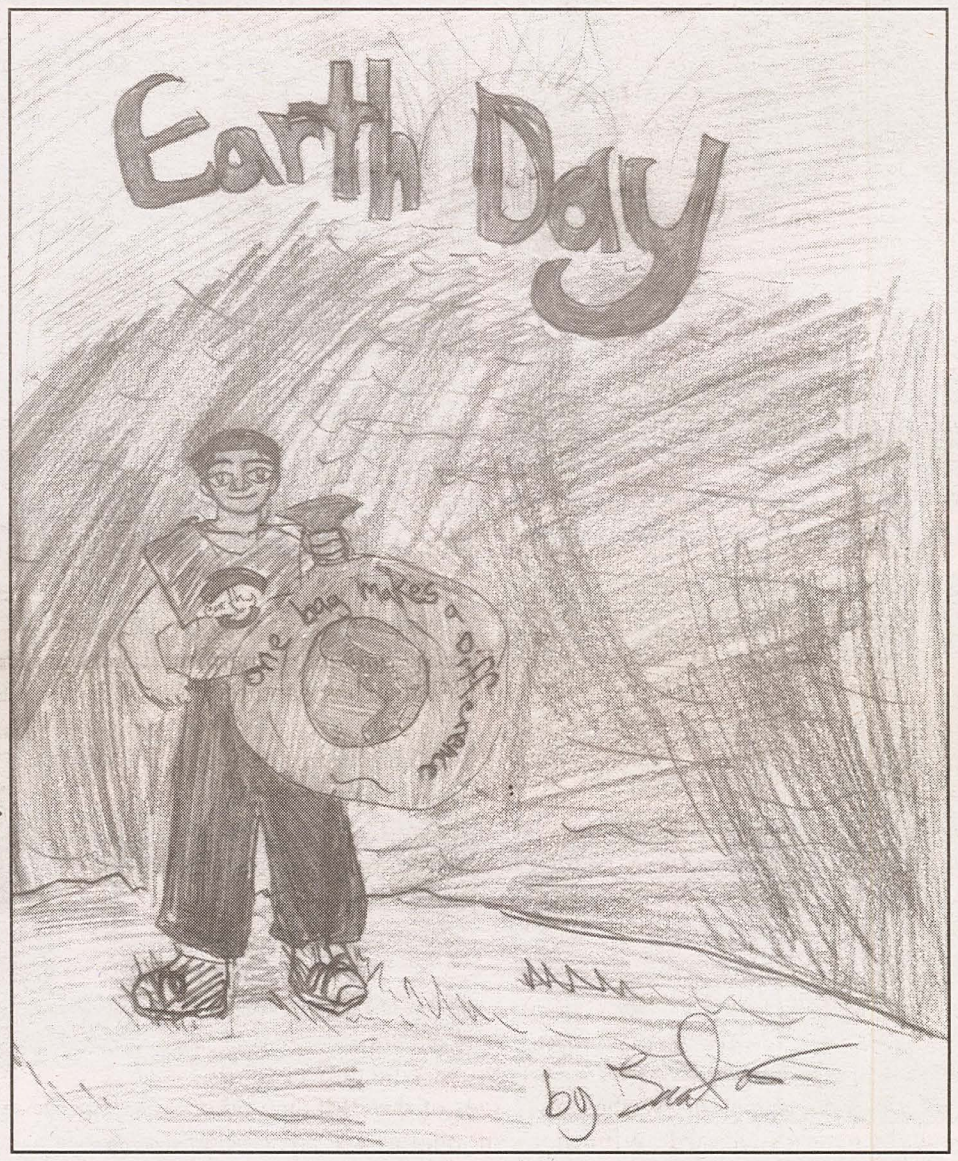


Jaaffar Abdullah *is 16 year-old, 11th grade high school student who attends the Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy program, hosted at the South Berkeley Community Church. His social and environmental interest is reflected in his drawing. Earth Day deals with our responsibity as members of society and care-takers of the planet. Jaaffar understands the connection between the present and the future. He says that he would like to see people take responsibity for their environment.*



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40th Anniversary

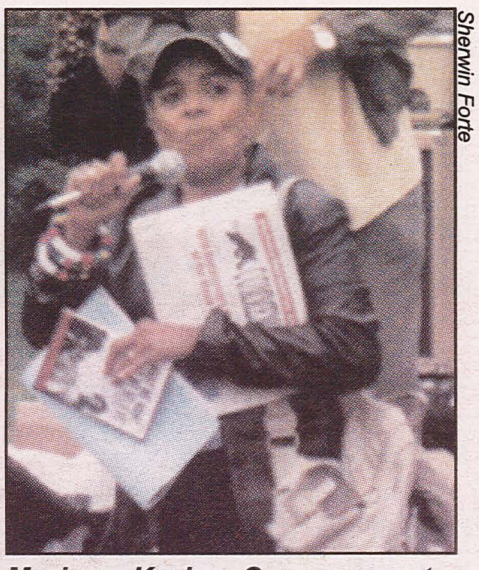
Continued from page 1

Nia Imara

Pam Africa (left) and Kiilu Nyasha lead the Political Prisoners Workshop.

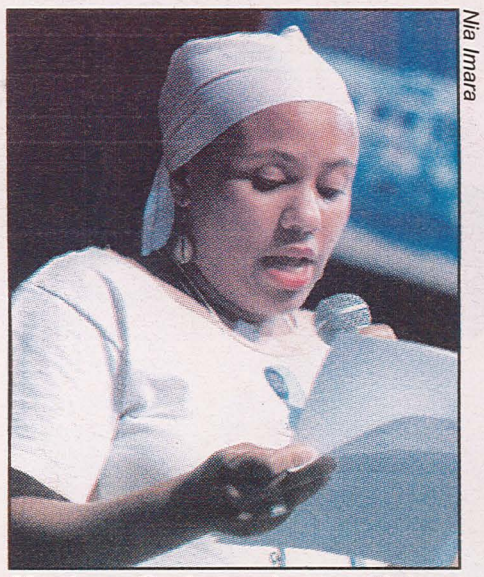
Sherwin Forte

In remembrance, former BPP members and families met at the Alameda Courthouse, October 1[illegible], 2006.



Sherwin Forte

Marlene Krohn, Commemorator volunteer at the Sunday rally at Bobby Hutton (DeFremery) Park.



Nia Imara

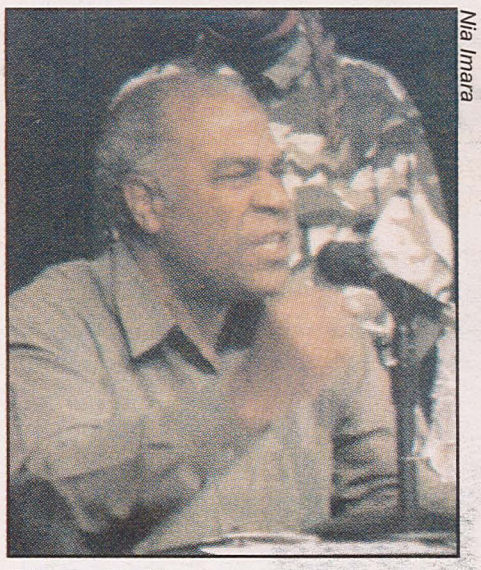
Monique Code reads an article at the Political Prisoners Workshop.

Sherwin Forte

Members of the Brown Beret and the Committee of Prisoners of Conscience at BPP 40th Anniversary, in Oakland.

Sherwin Forte

Fists-raised, original BPP members Sherwin Forte and Tarika Lewis (right) at the Alameda Courthouse with fellow former BPP members.



Nia Imara

Pierre LaBossier spoke about political repression in Haiti.

Nia Imara

Robert King Wilkson (left) of the Angola 3, and a lead organizer of the New Orleans Chapter of the BPP, and Fred Hampton, Jr., Prisoner of Conscience Committee (POCC), spoke at the Political Prisoners Workshop.

black newspaper… I taught William Jenning (Billy X) photography when I was teaching journalism at Merritt College."

Overall, the media workshop made the point that the struggle continues. "The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party and *The Commemorator* newspaper that we publish is dedicated to the Ten Point Program as manifested in the all volunteer production of our newspaper and the expansion of our Li'l Bobby Hutton Literacy Campaign. Today more people suffer as poverty increases and our community faces more devastation than in 1966 when our party began. Former BPP members are still locked up…Mumia and all political prisoners must be set free!" Dickson emphasized.

Nia Imara

Malik Rahim of Common Ground (right) in New Orleans, a former BPP organizer, speaks with Commemorator volunteer, Ali LV King (second from left).

Other highlights of the celebration and conference included a workshop on political prisoners by Kiilu Nyasha and Pam Africa of the Friends and Family of Mumia. The BPP International workshops were headed by sister Kathleen Cleaver, former BPP Communication Secretary, currently working as an attorney and teaching Law at Emory University, and sister Charlotte O'Neal, a former BPP member. O'Neal lives with her husband, Pete O'Neal, founder of the Kansas City branch of BPP, who has been in political exile for over 35 years. Now living in Imbasseni Tanzania, the couple oversee a Black Panther community center and a fresh water project for communities where fresh water is not easy to come by.

October 14, Saturday was filled with workshops and presentations from the various BPP chapters and branches across the country. "I remember how we used to sell them papers all day and have political education classes in the evenings, and right back up the first thing the next morning, going to prepare the food for the free breakfast program. The pace was fast and tense," said one former BPP member from the Philadelphia Chapter. Another former member from Dallas described other duties, "Some members had to stand security… sometimes all night… and you better not fall asleep!"

After a long day of activities, over 300 former BPP members along with their families and friends, gathered at Jack London Square where they enjoyed food prepared by Jack London Restaurant and live music.

At 11 am Sunday morning, October 15, former BPP members met to take photos together on the steps of the Alameda Court House, where, 40 years earlier, radical protests took place demanding "Free Huey!" They used this campaign to expose and speak out against police brutality and the condition of exploitation and oppression in the ghettos of the US. This 1968 call for revolutionary change dovetailed with the anti-war movement against the escalation of the Vietnam imperialist war led by the Nixon administration.

Winding Down With a Youth Workshop and Rally

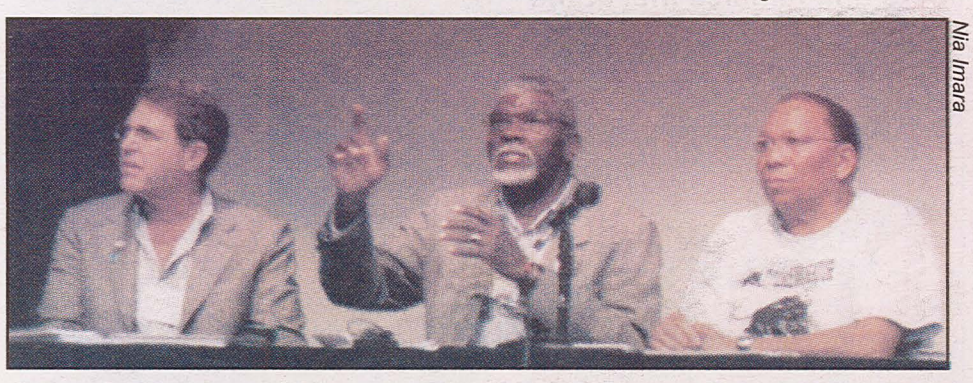
The conference and celebration, attended by over 600 people, came to a close at Bobby Hutton Park (DeFremery Park) in West Oakland, where CCBPP volunteers provided and served donated bar-b-que ribs to over 400 people including former BPP members, their children and grandchildren, BPP volunteers and supporters. Over 50 youths particpated

Sherwin Forte

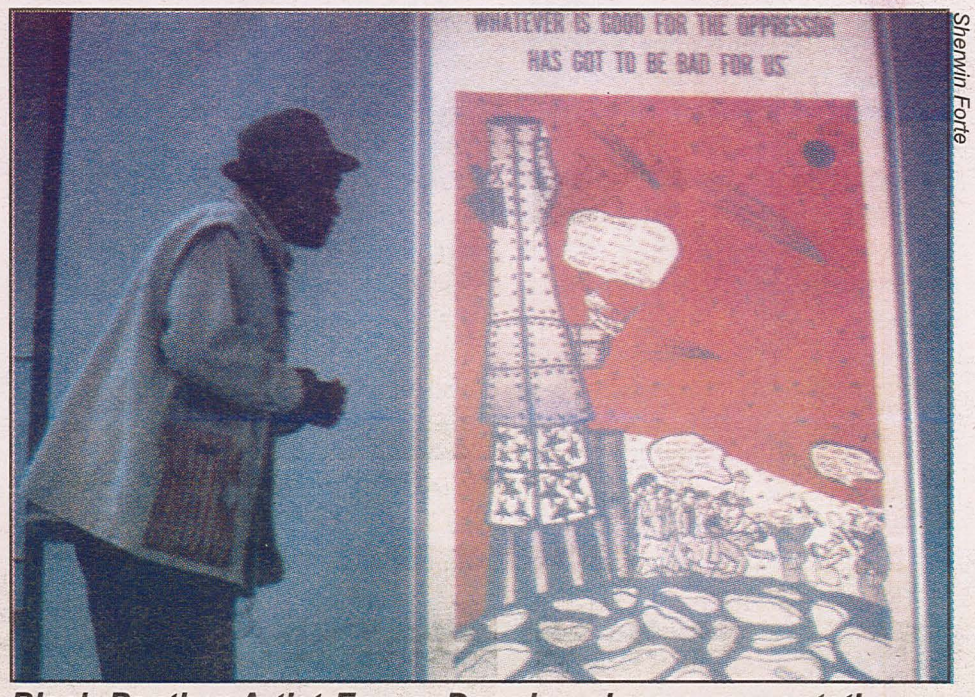
Comrade sisters (l to r) N'zinger Conway, Tarika Lewis and Adama Mosley dance to the music at the Alameda County Courthouse to celebrate the BPP 40th Anniversary.

Sherwin Forte

Former BPP member Gary Owens of Seattle (right) and Emory Douglas at the 40th Anniversary rally at Bobby Hutton Park (DeFremery).


Nia Imara

(l to r) Stephen Shames, BPP photo-journalist; Elbert "Big Man" Howard, BPP founding member; and Melvin Dickson, Commemoration Committee Chairman, lead the Media Workshop.

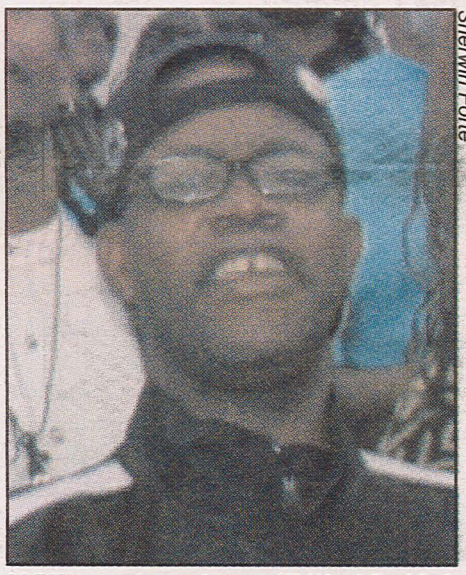


Sherwin Forte

Black Panther Artist Emory Douglas gives a presentation on some of his revolutionary art at the Malonga Art Center.

Sherwin Forte

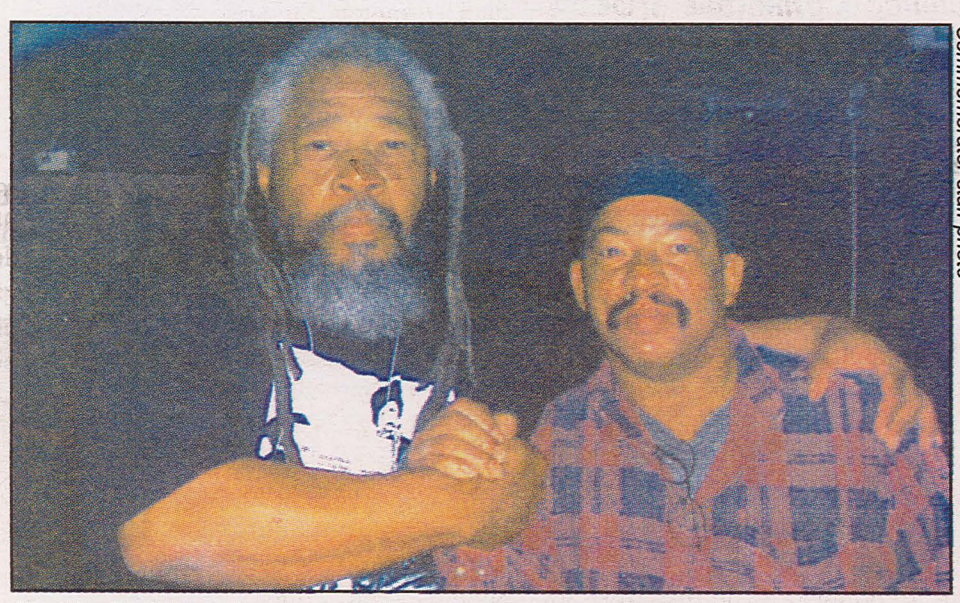
Kathleen Cleaver led the International Workshop at the BPP 40th Anniversary in Oakland, California.


Sherwin Forte

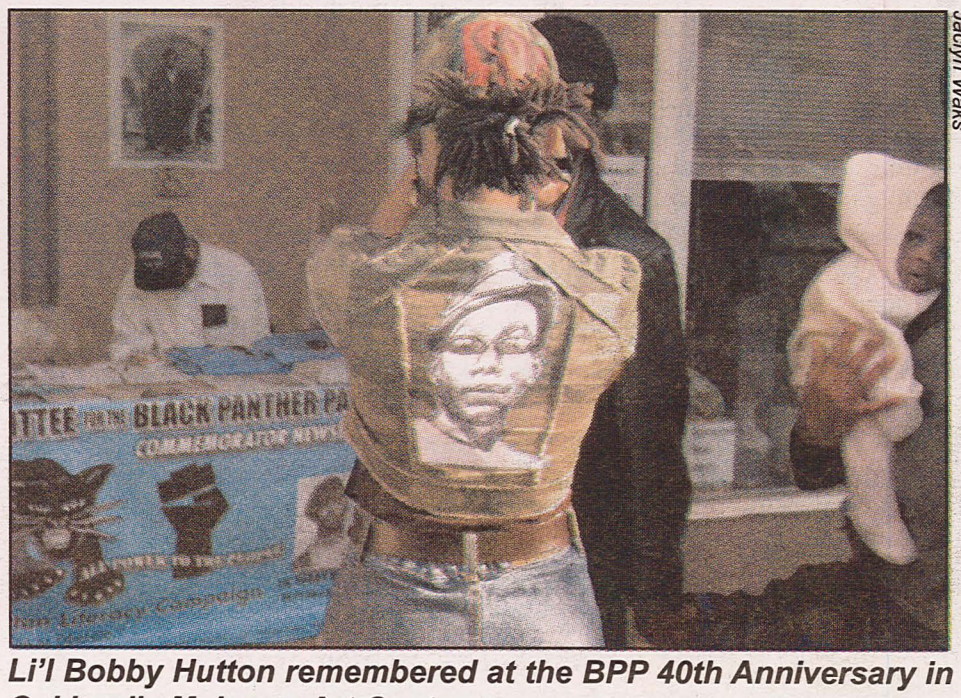
William Jennings (Billy X) 40th Anniversary lead organizer.

Sherwin Forte

Los Angeles Panthers and Panther's families at the Alameda County Courthouse in honor of the BPP 40th Anniversary in Oakland, California.


Commemorator staff photo

Malik Rahim, former BPP organizer and founder of Common Ground in New Orleans (left), with Arthur Thompson, full-time organizer and CCBPP Volunteers Coordinator.



Jaclyn Waks

Li'l Bobby Hutton remembered at the BPP 40th Anniversary in Oakland's Malonga Art Center.

in a children's photography workshop, coordinated by Aperture, publishers of Stephen Shames' *The Black Panthers*. The workshop was held across from the rally at the West Oakland Library. The youths were provided with free disposable cameras to supplement the class instruction. There were lessons to be learned and questions to be asked by both young and old. The event was a success because of the deep political commitment, participation and spirit of the people. Now we must carry it on in the day to day work of organizing and building the programs everyone talked about.

Power to the People.

Volunteer Expansion

Continued from page 1

recently lost his brother due to oppressive conditions and the violence that accompanies those conditions.

What Causes the Devastation Black, Poor, and Oppressed Communities Face?

According to Dickson, "The United States government, currently led by the Bush administration, is desperately seeking to sustain the profits of its multi-national corporations through military conquest, economic free-trade agreements and other policies exploiting cheap labor in less developed countries. The goverment uses Survival shows, iPods, computer games, etc. to distract the American population from their current economic depression, including an unprecedented federal debt. It is the low-income and poor of the world who suffer the most from these genocidal policies as they struggle daily for their very existence, lacking survival necessities such as food, clothing, shelter, or medical care. The resulting devastation of the majority of people in countries from Iraq to Haiti continues to increase day-by-day, and the level of resistance by the masses continues to increase day-by-day, paid for with the only thing they barely own, their lives.

"On the domestic front, most major U.S. corporations have closed their U.S. factories and moved elsewhere, the latest being General Motors outsourcing 40,000 workers for cheaper labor."

Where corporations have not moved out of the country, they are exploiting the economic depression at home and hiring temporary workers, part-time workers, prison and welfare workers at low wages and no benefits. Those lucky enough to have a job are working harder and making less. The average job is paying $5 a week less than it was in 1999, wages have not kept up with inflation and the real income for at least 60% of the U.S. population has been falling for 25 years. The personal savings rate dropped to a negative 2% last November, the lowest since World War II.

To sustain a war economy (the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan alone cost $8 billion per month in fiscal year 2006), the United States is expected to spend $513 billion for defense, a sum that exceeds the combined defense budgets for the rest of the world. The government has cut taxes for the wealthy, as the U.S. leads the world in creating new millionaires, and continues to cut social programs for the poor. The gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. As of 2003 the top 1% of households owned 57.5% of the corporate wealth, up from 54% the year before, and the top group's share of corporate wealth has grown by 50% since 1991, when it was 38.7%.

In California, this means for every additional dollar earned by the bottom 90% of the population between 1990 and 2002, those in the top .1% earned an additional $18,000, up from $162 in 1970.

These policies are wreaking havoc in our black and poor communities. In October 2006, the number of children across America facing "food insecurity," (the government's term for hunger) people lacking enough nutrition to lead a healthy life, has surged. The number of people who are hungry because they can't afford to buy enough food rose to 38.2 million in 2004, including 13.3 million children who live with an unsteady supply of food and this number continues to rise. In December 2005, the U.S. Conference of Mayors determined that the demand for emergency food went up 12% the previous year, and demand for space in homeless shelters increased 6%.

With the Shift From Factory Jobs, Unskilled Workers of All Races Have Lost Ground, But None More so Than Black Men.

A recent *New York Times* article citing several current sociological studies concluded that "Black men in the United States face a far more dire situation than is portrayed by common employment and education statistics. The share of young black men without jobs has climbed relentlessly with only a slight pause during the economic peak of the late 1990s. In 2000, 65% of black male high school dropouts in their 20s were jobless, that is unable to find work, not seeking it or incarcerated. By 2004, the share had grown to 72%, compared with 34% of whites and 19% of Hispanic dropouts. Even when high school graduates were included, half of black men in their 20s were jobless in 2004, up from 46% in 2000.

Incarceration rates climbed in the 1990s and reached historic highs in the past few years. In 1995, 16% of black men in their 20s who did not attend college were in jail or prison. By 2004, 21% were incarcerated. By their mid-30s, 6 of 10 black men who had dropped out of school had spent time in prison.

Low-income communities face government cuts in medical care, schools, public housing programs and libraries in our neighborhoods while at the same time "law and order" programs are implemented to increase police forces in inner cities and build jails and prisons. For example in California, where there are already 33 prisons filled to twice their designated capacity, the governor is proposing to spend $13.1 billion to build 83,000 new cells over the next decade.

Literacy is at an all-time low. According to a CBS release in December 2004, 3,000 children nationwide drop out of high school daily. For those that do graduate from high school, 64% can't read. In the inner cities, more than half of all black men do not finish high school. As college tuition skyrockets, higher education is unaffordable for most. Only 11% of students at the nation's top universities are from low-income families. Additionally, the average student graduates from college with $26,000 in debt.

Oakland's education system is no exception to this trend. Starved for money by the state and then put in receivership in 2002 for alleged mismanagement under "school czar" Randoph Ward, the State Administrator cut virtually every academic program in the district, and forced significant layoffs of teachers and classified staff. In the 2005 results of the STAR testing, over 50% of students taking the test performed "below basic level." Many Oakland schools have no school newspaper.

These are the issues and struggles that our communities need information about. This is what our intercommunal newspaper must cover. This is how *The Commemorator* is dedicated to continuing to serve the people by providing this news, and with analysis of world affairs in accordance with the teachings of Huey P. Newton on intercommunalism and our goals of winning revolutionary change for the dignity and self-determination of all people to be possible.

If you want to help change these devastating conditions and help distribute *The Commemorator*, please call 510-652-7170.

All Power to the People

GRASSROOTS ARTISTS MOVEMENT (G.A.ME), INC.

G.A.ME, Inc. is a grassroots artist campaign founded in 2001 by artists Erykah Badu, Mos Def, Talib Kweli and Dead Prez.

G.A.ME is an international non-profit that aims to provide health care, development and unionization to hip-hop and all artists with the goal of redirecting hip-hop resources back into the Black and Latino communities.

Artists on labels currently make an average $25,000 per year and receive few health benefits. **G.A.ME**, Inc. and the International Artists Union (IAU) will be campaigning for a law to allow artists to unionize and bargain as a group with labels and music groups.

G.A.ME supports positive and influential Hip-Hop artists and puts out a CD compilation titled *Get in the G.A.ME* featuring artists such as Dead Prez and Immortal Technique. **G.A.ME** spoke at the National Hip-Hop Political Convention '04 on health disparities.

G.A.ME, Inc also was featured in *Russell Simmons' One World, XXI, the Source* and *Village Voice*. **G.A.ME** representatives have been interviewed on Power 105.1 FM, Hot97 and WBAI 99.5FM in New York City.

G.A.ME HealthCare Network

Since 2004, **G.A.ME** has offered free medical, dental and free to low-cost prescriptions for **G.A.ME** members. HealthCare services address diseases affecting the community such as HIV/AIDS and asthma with campaigns in the U.S. and Nigeria. **G.A.ME** also plans quarterly health screenings and forums on health education.

The R.E.B.E.L. Program
(Rallying Educating & Building Effective Leadership)

The R.E.B.E.L. programs offers youth leadership training for participants ages 14 to 25 and actively seeks to prevent youth incarceration. Alternative To Incarceration (ATI) under R.E.B.E.L. provides leadership training, employment assistance, academic help, and passes to community events.

Grassroots Artists MovEment (**G.A.ME**), Inc
Contact us: P.O. Box 726
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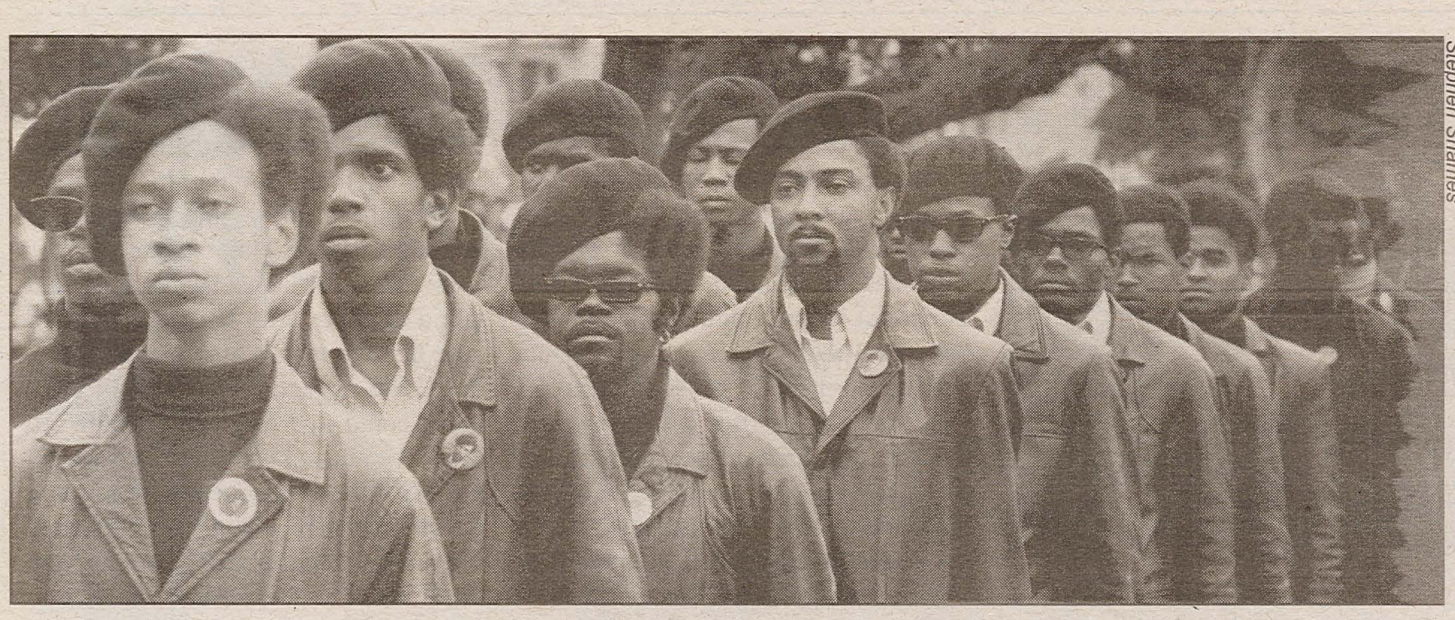
(347) 431-1826
www.Kickgame.com Contact@Kickgame.com



Stephen Shames

Panthers line up at a Free Huey rally in DeFremery Park, Oakland, July 28, 1968.

Artist Corner: Stephen Shames

Continued from page 8

the church during George Jackson's funeral. I stayed inside the New Haven office all night waiting for a police raid, hoping to get a shot of the police bursting through the door. Luckily that did not happen."

The publisher of the book, Aperture, will open an exhibit of this work at Aperture Gallery in New York City in the spring of 2007 which will then travel to venues around the world. In their publicity for the exhibit they eloquently portrayed the book stating, "During the height of the movement, from 1967 to 1973, photographer Stephen Shames ... captured not only the organization's public face — street demonstrations, protests, and militant posturing — but also behind-the-scenes moments, from private meetings held in the Panther's headquarters, to Bobby Seale at work on his mayoral campaign in Oakland. *The Black Panthers*, "brings together for the first time a remarkable collection of never-before-published images from Shames's archive. ...Shames's insider status enabled him to create an uncommonly nuanced portrait of this dynamic social movement, during one of the most tumultuous periods in U.S. history."

With all the very recent positive press about the book, *The Black Panthers*, is long overdue. In light of the negative images the mainstream press has portrayed the organization with over the past 40 years, it is high time that the world understand the bold platform of the Party that this book provides on behalf of the Black community, the working poor, and all peace-loving people in America. After all a picture is worth a thousand words and action is supreme. It is for this reason that we are thankful for the many years of dedication to the movement and the Black Panther Party legacy that Stephen Shames's beautifully-done photos provide us.

Stephen Shames has published three books with Aperture, *Pursuing The Dream*, *Outside the Dream*, and *Empower Zone*. Shames's photographs are in the permanent collections of the International Center of Photography, New York; National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C.; Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego; University of California Bancroft Library, Berkeley; and Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. He is represented by Polaris Images.

Stephen Shames's photographs have been featured in the following magazines:

MODERN PAINT: *Something Happening but You Don't Know What it is, on the Panther's Rise and Fall.*

AMSTERDAM NEWS; (New York) *The Black View, Return of the Black Panther's Book.*

BOOK FORUM; Back in Black

ESSENCE MAGAZINE; *Fight The Power*

THE VILLAGE VOICE; *Come Out Fighting*

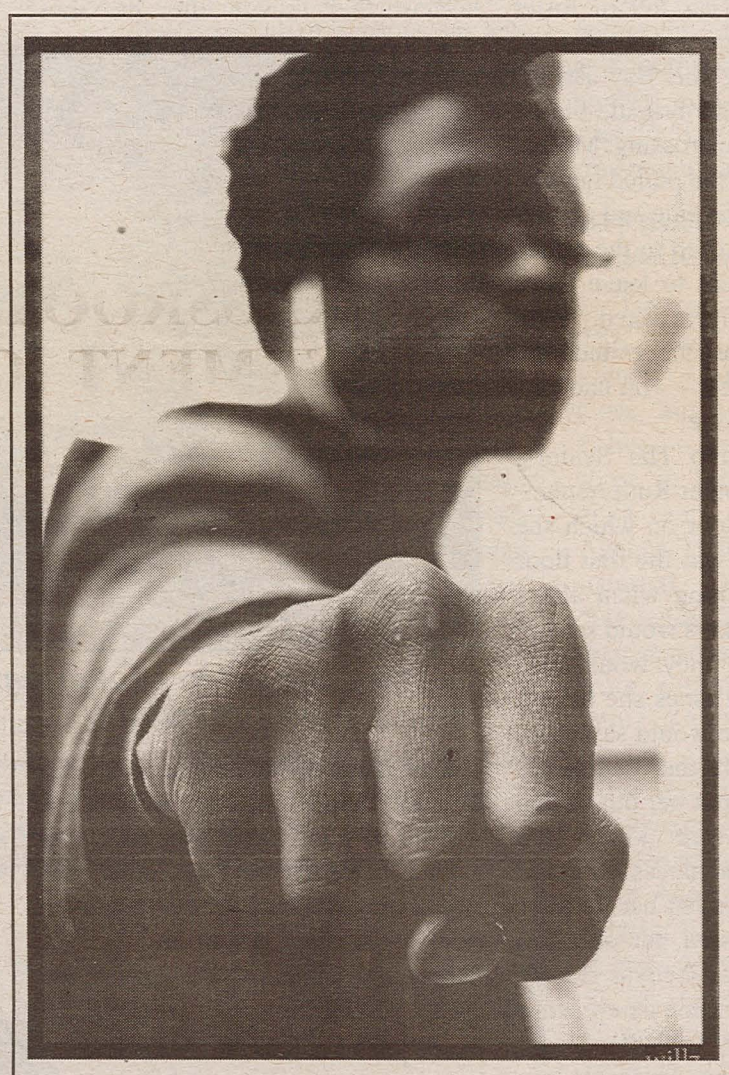
AMERICAN PHOTO; *The Most Underrated Photographers of the Past 30 years.*

TIME OUT NEW YORK; *Three Questions for Bobby Seale*

TOKION; *Power to the People*

HARPER'S; *On the Lower Frequencies; Rethinking the Black Power Movement*

All Power to the People



YOUNG BLACKS WITH AMBITION STATEMENT

We as young black men and women need to restore hope, reverence and the desireness to overcome the corruption of today's world. The generations before us sacrificed and lost lives for us to have freedom and peace. However, statistically, the majority of our race will not or cannot vote. It's not by coincidence that we are bound to these negative situations that evolve around us; it was designed. On the streets today, all we see is sex, drugs, violence, and death. Blacks killing Blacks, cops killing Blacks, AIDS killing Blacks, etc. Besides these severe circumstances, thousands of our Black men and women are locked up or on their way to a life behind bars. The political officials make us work for free, for their selfish benefits. Just like the slavery days, now it is legalized. Not only that, once released, we are an outcast of society, and are restricted from obtaining successful jobs in corporate America.

IT IS UP TO US TO RESTORE
THE LOVE, HOPE, UNITY.

Haiti Update

Continued from page 7

that blocking entrances was a tactic used by MINUSTAH prior to the July 6, 2005 Cité Soleil Blitzkrieg massacre in which 60 civilians were killed by UN troops, tanks and helicopters under Brazilian command.

"The indiscriminate UN attacks on civilians in the poor neighborhoods have got to stop," said one delegation statement. "The residents of Cité Soleil have repeatedly said they want an end to the violent repression of the country's poor by Haitian police and the UN occupying force."

For more information, contact Haiti Action Committee — See below

Then in mid-September, "UN Special Envoy Edmond Mulet, civilian chief of MINUSTAH, brazenly announced a new escalation — increased UN troop levels, military occupation of new areas in the capital, and 32 new checkpoints where citizens will be subjected to search, interrogation, harassment and intimidation." (Reuters.) Foreign troops giving orders to Haitians in their own country! "This is a war," said one Cité Soleil resident, "against the poor."

In January 2005, John Maxwell wrote a memorable and still-timely column about Haiti in *The Jamaica Observer*. "The world," he wrote, "...is not paying any notice to the 200-year Holocaust still under way in Haiti." There, too, the people in danger must feel tortured and murdered by the indifference of a world conned into believing that the high-minded leaders of the United States, France, Canada and Brazil have the interest of the Haitian people at heart, when their agents of torture, murder, maim and rape Haitians for no better reason than that [the Haitians] support their democratically elected and unconstitutionally removed president, Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

For more information, contact Haiti Action Committee 510-483-7481 or email at info@haitiaction.org

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Congratulations to BPP for your 40 years of support on behalf of the African American community.

Ruth Jones

Continued from page 3

Centered in front of her window is a delicate set of shelves that holds her television, framed by photographs and 100 years of memories. Pictures of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren were evident, but the photos that stood out the most were two large pictures; one of her pastor, Rev. Cecil Williams of Glide Memorial Church in San Francisco, and the other of Dr. Huey P. Newton.

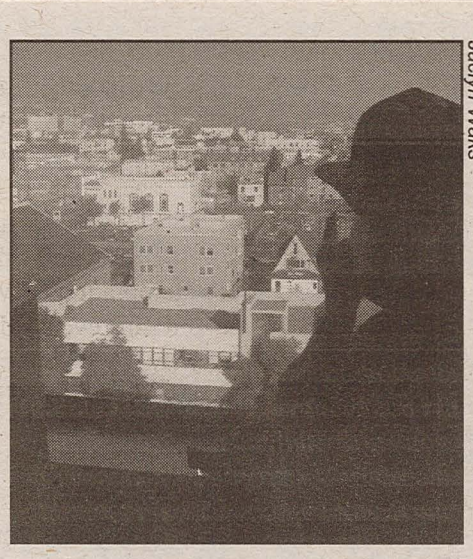
Walking back from the window to rejoin me at her dining room table she paused standing next to the shelves, silent for a moment, with her eyes and face breaking into pure joy as she pointed to the picture of Huey. "That's my boy right there, yes sir, that's my boy."

"That picture was taken when they came to arrest him. That's his attorney back there and over there is his bodyguard, and right there is me." If you look carefully just past Huey's shoulder you can see the sun glazed face of a middle aged woman with her eyes fixed on Huey's back. Mother Ruth told me that when the police came to arrest Huey he told them, "Go ahead, you can arrest me but I'm not talking until my Mother gets here." She believed his response to have confused them on more than one level, but they took the bait and asked, "Well who is your Mother?" He answered, "Mother Ruth. Mother Ruth Jones is my Mother."

Mother Ruth explains how she had met Dr. Huey P. Newton. "I was a Girl Scout leader back then, and The Intercommunal Youth Institute, the school founded in the early 70's by the Panthers, had a lot of students that were also in my Girl Scout troop, and Bobby and Huey asked me to come to one of their meetings and that's how Huey and I first met. Huey was doing so much for the community and I was out in the community, so we soon became close, and being that I was much older than him he began calling me Mother."

Asked when she joined the Black Panther Party, Mother Ruth clarified, "I can't say that I joined them. I was connected with them, and they started calling me their mother." She remembers well participating in the events and activities, working hard with the Party and the programs that immediately benefited the community, the country and the world. One of her assignments with the Black Panthers was leading the Seniors' Safe Environment Program. She is also very proud of the Panther's groundbreaking work in identifying and treating sickle cell anemia.

At the same time, Mother Ruth was also working as a social worker, and she did home visits. "Well I would



Jaclyn Waks

Mother Ruth Jones looks out over the Bay from her Oakland apartment, reminiscing.

go into the homes of the people," she recalls, "it was hard work. If I saw babies in need, I would get them to the welfare office. Anybody in the neighborhood that was really in need, I would go interview them and take them down to the welfare office."

Mother Ruth remembers back to a day the Panthers had faced harassment. They were on their way to Hunters Point in San Francisco to help low-income people in the community. Mother Ruth had a car full of foster children who went everywhere she did. They were crossing the Bay Bridge when she saw a police brigade blocking the Panthers from crossing. Mother Ruth describes how she pulled her station wagon over to the side and got out of the car and walked up to the police officers and told them to leave those boys alone. The Officers asked, "Who are you?" and some one called out, "That's Huey's Mother – you had better leave that lady alone!"

Upon moving into The Senior's satellite building Mother Ruth remembers that the tenth floor on which she still lives to this day was the first floor finished. Every morning when all of the construction workers would see her leaving the building they would ask, "Where is she going, does she have a job?" And the people would say, "No, she volunteers with the Panthers." They were going to put her out of this building because she knew the Panthers. They would harass her at the meetings, and they called her up after Huey's trial and cussed her out. But then word got out that she was Huey's Mother and with this came a new sense of respect. At Huey's trial there were all kinds of people lined up to get into the Court House but couldn't get in, and Mother Ruth was one of them. Huey had someone sent out in front of the Court House to ask for Huey's Mother. When she would go to the department store and wait in the long line of people a clerk would tell her to come right up. Anywhere that she would go and be ignored someone would explain who she was and they would let her right in. She was able to go any place that she wanted.

Asked what Dr. King was like, Mother Ruth smiled and slowly said, "He was a beautiful man." Mother Ruth had met Angela Davis at Glide Memorial Church and it was Angela that encouraged her to go to Atlanta with her to meet Dr. and Mrs. King. It was that connection that brought Mother Ruth Jones to yet another forefront, joining the civil rights movement and marching in the South.

Mother Ruth is the last one left of a family of fourteen. She remembers when people would say to her brother, "You know your sister is hanging out with those Panthers," and her brother would tell them, "No, my sister is a Girl Scout leader." Mother Ruth said, "My brother didn't agree with me, what I was doing… And later when they saw I was so closely connected, they began to be afraid. They asked why didn't I get a job? What was I doing with Huey Newton anyway?"

"Well, Huey's doing a job, he's trying to help people," Mother Ruth told them. "But people were concerned. Most people didn't like it because they thought they had those

Photo Courtesy of Ruth Villa Jones

"Mother Jones" in background watching Huey's back during court procedure.

leather coats on and those guns, that they was dangerous. No. So then they wanted to know why they had those leather coats on and the guns, why would they do that? They draw attention." It was attention that the Panthers wanted, for the cause. Her family's concern eventually turned to admiration, and they were very proud of her commitment and the work she was doing in the community.

As she mentions the recent death count of youth on the streets that she had read in the papers, she states, "If I could of got to Jerry Brown I would of sure liked to talk to him, maybe someone could have told me where he lives and I could find him and I would tell him. You know, I used to baby-sit Jerry Brown. When I would run into him at events and they would be discussing old times, I'd make him go back to the times when he was so bad I'd have to make him sit down!"

I asked Mother Ruth what she would like to tell the young people who are now trying to find their way through the chaos that surrounds them today, as they're trying to understand what it will take to become leaders and successfully win the fight for justice in their lifetime.

"I would like to say to them: keep working for the people, doing for yourself and the people, stop these kids from killing each other, get into the schools and teach these kids. That's what I want, you all to teach these kids. Don't forget them! Go to their mothers the way the Panthers used to. Start with your own and maybe we can get to them. They need to be told how to love and care for each other. So that's the first thing you need to work on now."

All Power to the People!

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Panther on the Prowl

Continued from page 3

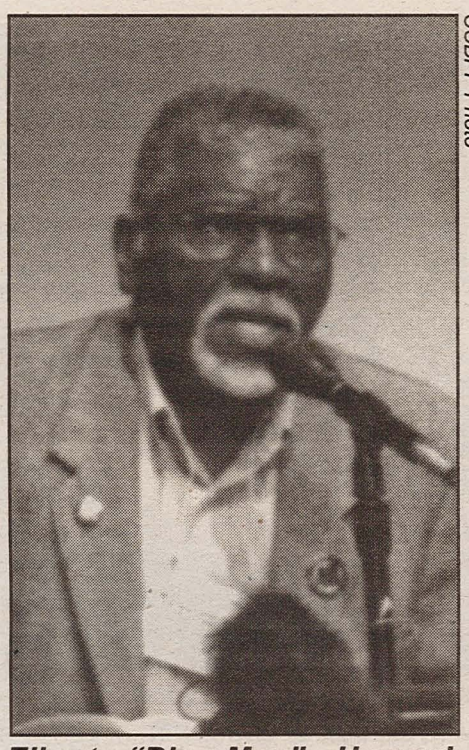
"What if I had not armed him? What if I had gone with him? What if I had called it off?"

Big Man became a full-time community activist while still attending Grove Street Community College. Taking advantage of opportunities presented to him by the college president, Big Man in conjunction with Dr. Bert Small and Panther sister Andrea Jones opened a medical clinic on campus that tested for high blood pressure and sickle cell anemia, two diseases notoriously known to afflict Black people. He also gained control of unused work-study monies to set up a program for parolees, along with programs that would assist ex-offenders in taking courses to receive their G.E.D. Raising awareness with regards to the inhumane, leprous attitude toward inmates, particularly inmates of color, would be a theme Big Man would revisit.

Elected BPP spokesman, Big Man suggested opening their International Headquarters Office in the morning to present a professional, more organized approach and offered to come every morning at 9 a.m. to do so, thereby establishing their practice.

His first time attending a convention to speak on behalf of the BPP was in San Francisco with a group of probation officers. After overcoming jitters, he started asking the audience of probation officers tough questions to gain knowledge and to reinforce the need for the following; full employment for our people, freedom from jails, access to technology, and education that reflects the true history of our people (BPP Program Points #2, 9, 10, and 5 respectively).

As the teachings, philosophies, and social programs of the BPP spread throughout the world, a representative was needed to travel and educate people in foreign countries as to the struggles of Black Americans. Big Man filled that role. From Germany to Sweden, to Algiers to Denmark, he worked devotedly with Solidarity Groups overseas doing interviews with radio, TV and newspapers. BPP materials such as buttons and newspapers were in high demand abroad.



CCBPP Photo

***Elbert "Big Man" Howard, author of* Panther on the Prowl.**

Not limited to Europe and Northern Africa, news of the BPP reached all the way to Japan. In 1969 Big Man, along with Roberta Alexandria, a Panther and a Richmond, California native, flew to Tokyo with the mission of uniting the struggling people and speaking about the power of solidarity and the fight against imperialism. One of their first trips while in Tokyo was to the Sanya district, a ghetto full of peasants who, due to the lineage of Japanese birthright; being second or third born, didn't inherit the land of their ancestors. They lived in unsanitary conditions and worked in factories for 2,000-2,500 yen/day ($6-$7 dollars). Relating strongly to the resistance against police brutality and oppression of poor people that the BPP fought to obliterate, in 1968 the Sanya Liberation League led an attack against police.

While in Japan, Big Man and Roberta met with the Sanriyuka and Holspaido people. The Sanriyuka were a village of farmers who were fighting to prevent the government from building an airport on their land which would destroy their crops and thereby destroy their village. Some farmers, ignorant as to the reptilian nature of banks, sold their land, stopped farming, and — never having been exposed to money — gambled it all away and found themselves in a state of devastation, their once rich fields barren.

On the other hand, the farmers who resisted the bank's temptations maintained rich fields and an even richer sense of humanity. The Holspaido area consisted of farm women fighting for the right to maintain their land against a missile silo site near Mt. Fuji.

After extensive travel throughout Africa, Europe, and Asia, Big Man was needed back in the United States, largely due to the government's attack on the BPP. Aimed at destroying and defaming the BPP, FBI Chief J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO program had hooked in its claws and overtly murdered, tortured, and falsely imprisoned hundreds of BPP leaders and affiliates across the country, largely by using informants and provocateurs to infiltrate various chapters.

George Sams was one such traitor to his own people. From Oakland to New York to Connecticut, Sams intimidated members through violence. One such victim of Sam's rampage was Alex Rackley, a Panther who was kidnapped and found beaten, tortured, scalded, and shot once in the head in Connecticut in 1969. The police charged eight Panthers with Rackley's murder, including Bobby Seale who was in town to make a speech at Yale. The murder of Alex Rackley by a supposed Black Panther fueled the FBI's efforts to bring down the BPP once and for all. Considered a fugitive, the FBI raided Panther chapters looking for Sams. Once captured in Canada, Sams plead guilty to first degree murder and became the prosecution's star witness against the other eight. After serving only four years in prison, Sam was released and groomed by the FBI in the Fred Hampton murder trial in the mid 1970s. Later, to bring truth to an otherwise biased view of the Alex Rackley tragedy in New Haven, the Panthers released a statement that named the police in collaboration with George Sams as Rackley's murderer and that Rackley was a loyal Panther unlike Sams, who must have been an informant.

As this incident illustrates, "everything black is not necessarily good." Black people had better check their history and see how organizations and leaders that are truly working in their behalf are destroyed. Malcolm X once stated that he 'had the best organization for black people in the western hemisphere and niggers destroyed it," said Big Man.

Having worked for prison reform while attending Grove Street Community College, Big Man was once again asked to work with prisoners, this time in Attica State Prison in New York State in September 1971. During a period of five days protesting "widespread maltreatment and inhumane conditions" about 1000 inmates, mostly Black, took control of Attica's D block. The reason? They demanded "higher wages, religious and political freedom, dietary, medical, and recreational improvements, and total amnesty." Commissioner Russell Oswald of the Department of Corrections invited the BPP to the prison to act as a liaison between the inmates and prison administration. He was willing to grant nearly all their requests except "political asylum in a nonimperialistic country"vi and the firing of Superintendent Van Cusy. Whereas there was little the BPP could do, Bobby Seale and Big Man on behalf of Huey Newton and all the Black Panthers "stood in solidarity with the inmates."vii On September 13th, Governor Rockefeller ordered the take over of the prison by 1500 state troopers. The massacre ended with the murder of 29 inmates and 10 hostages. America was shamed into facing the realities of the horrible conditions under which inmates suffer.

Big Man concludes his book by reflecting on modern times: the subtle disappearance of the middle class, the government's systematic creation of a criminal class (mostly consisting of Black people), and the Orion Process in which the CIA brainwashes American citizens into committing terrorist acts against other Americans in a political attempt to justify re-writing the constitution. Big Man encourages all of us to study, learn, and read about our government and how little it cares for us; to learn about their secret political meetings that lead to an insane rationale for going to war. This leads to the stealing of our innate freedoms here in America making us prisoners in our own land. Study the way we are encouraged to think like sheep led to slaughter. Having fought for the people, Big Man wrote several pages of history reminding us that there are endless chapters still waiting to be recorded.

email: bigman0138howard@hotmail.com

[1]Gene Roberts was the same FBI agent that infiltrated the New York Chapter of the BPP and helped set up its members, known as The New York 21, by turning over evidence against them. Five years earlier, in 1965, he was on stage with Malcolm X at Harlem's Audubon Ballroom as his bodyguard while assassins riddled Malcolm X's body with bullets. See Black Panther News Service, 1971, Volume XIII.

All Power to the People!

Huey's Corner

Continued from page 5

father," who "were indicted for submitting false income statement on a VA Loan application for a home mortgage." (Ibid., p. 57.) This book details the history of the Department of Justice under Robert Kennedy, documenting the vigor with which alleged organized crime figures were prosecuted and the comparatively lackluster enforcement of civil rights laws under the same Administration.

6 See, e.g., generally Sidney Thomas Lens, Radicalism in America (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1969).

7 Thomas I. Emerson, The System of Freedom of Expression (New York: Random House, 1970), pp. 432-433.

8 U.S. Congress. Senate Select Committee To Study Governmental Operations with Respect to Intelligence Activities. Final Report: Book III. (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1976) (94th Cong., 2d sess., Senate Rept. No. 94-755), p. 7.

9 Ibid.

10 U.S. Congress. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Constitutional Rights. Political Intelligence in the Internal Revenue Service: The Social Service Staff. A Documentary Analysis (Washington: U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1974) (93rd Cong., 2nd sess.), p.51.

11 Center for National Security Studies, "The National Intelligence Act and the Rights of Americas, " First Principles: National Security and Civil Liberties, 5 (March/April 1980): 1.

12 Ibid.

13 Ibid., p. 2.

14 Book III: Final Report, p. 75

15 Ibid. p. 5.

16 "The National Intelligence Act," First Principles, p. 2.

17 Wise, "Free Again," Los Angeles Times, 9 March 1980.

18"The National Intelligence Act, "First Principles, p. 3.

19 Washington Post, 18 April 1980.

20 Ibid., 19 April 1980.

21 Charles Mohr, "Panel Backs Review Over Intelligence," New York Times, 9 May 1980.

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Mumia

Continued from page 4

Pedro Polakoff's Photos

In May, 2006, Schiffmann discovered two photographs on the internet that were taken by the only press photographer immediately present at the 1981 crime scene – Pedro Polakoff. The photographer arrived within 12 minutes of hearing about the shooting on the police radio and about 10 minutes before the Mobile Crime Unit (responsible for forensics and photographs) arrived. This unit had still not taken any photos when Polakoff left after 30-45 minutes at the scene.

Upon contacting Polakoff, Schiffmann learned that three of his 31 original shots had been published in Philly newspapers at the time, and five others were lost. Schiffmann told *Z Magazine* that he had published five of the 26 remaining photos to show the following three points.

"The cops manipulated evidence and supplied the trial court with stuff that was simply stage-managed. On Polakoff's photos, P.O. Faulkner's police hat at first is clearly on the roof of Billy Cook's VW, and only later on the sidewalk in front of 1234 Locust where it was photographed by the police photographer who arrived 10 minutes after Polakoff!

"In court Police Officer James Forbes claimed that he had 'secured' the weapons of both Faulkner and Mumia without touching them on their metal parts in order to not destroy potential fingerprints. However, in the single photo reprinted in the book you can see that Forbes is touching the weapons on their metal parts, and quite a few of Polakoff's other photos make it clear that Forbes touched and smudged these weapons all over, destroying any potential fingerprint evidence that may have been on them.

"The second-most important prosecution witness, cab driver Robert Chobert, simply was not parked in the spot, allegedly right behind Officer Faulkner's police squad car, where he claimed to have been and from where he claimed o have observed Mumia fire the shot that killed the officer."

Polakoff's observations don't stop there. Schiffmann writes in *Race*:

"According to Polakoff, at that time all the officers present expressed the firm conviction that Abu-Jamal had been the passenger in Billy Cook's VW and had fired and killed Faulkner by a single shot fired from the passenger seat of the car.

"Polakoff further reports that this opinion on the part of the police about what had happened was apparently based on the testimony of three witnesses who were still present at the crime scene, namely, by the parking lot attendant in charge of the parking lot on the northern side of Locust Street, by a drug addicted woman apparently acquainted with the parking lot attendant, and another woman. As Polakoff later heard from colleagues in the media, the parking lot attendant had disappeared the day after, while the drug-addicted witness died a couple of years later from an overdose.

"Whatever it was that these witnesses saw or did not see, we will probably never know-the interesting thing case is that neither of them

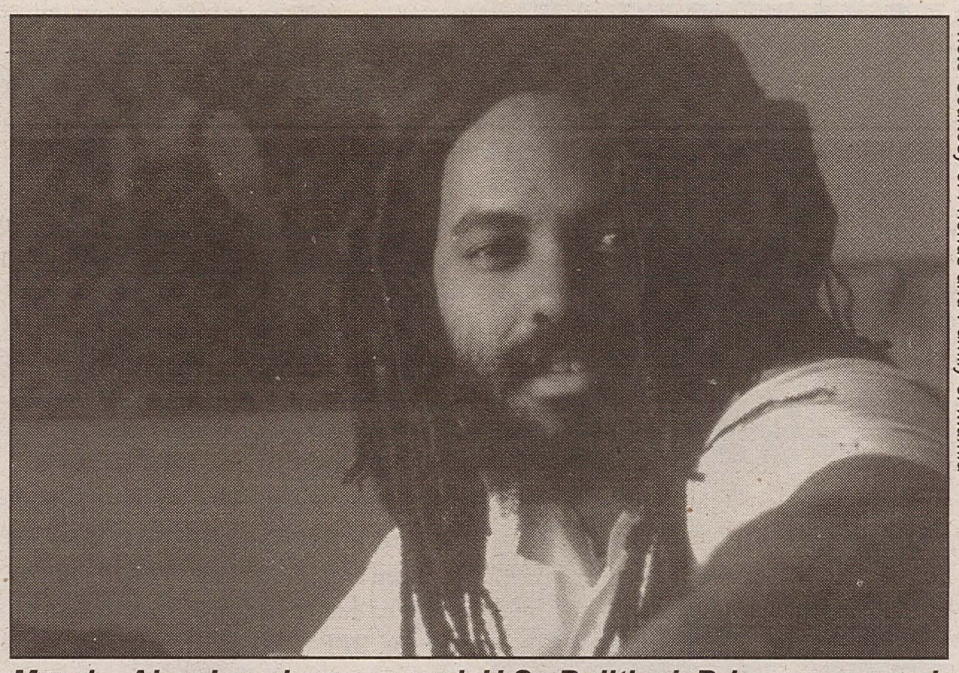

Photo Courtesy of Friends and Family of Mumia

Mumia Abu-Jamal, renowned U.S. Political Prisoner, award-winning journalist, and a former member of the BPP.

ever appeared in any report presented by the police or the prosecution."

Polakoff told Schiffmann that he was simply ignored when he repeatedly contacted the DA's office to give them account – and his photos – of the crime scene. Schiffmann has informed Mumia's lawyers about Polakoff's evidence. They are looking into it further.

No Bullet Traces in Sidewalk

The prosecution claims that Mumia stood over and shot at Faulkner 3-4 times (with only one shot hitting him) while Faulkner was lying on his back. Schiffmann asserts that if this were true, there would have had to have been 2-3 large divots in the pavement (next to Faulkner's body) resulting from the bullets' impact. Since photos and police reports to don't reveal any damage or bullet fragments in that location, Schiffmann concludes that the prosecution scenario must be false.

While this "missing divots" observation was publicly revealed in 2001 by Mumia's former lawyers, Schiffmann is literally the first writer to investigate this further. To support the assertion, Schiffmann interviewed a German Ballistics expert and was told that "such divots couldn't possibly have been overlooked." He concludes: "They were simply not there."

Furthermore, photographer Pedro Polakoff "emphatically denied that there could be any such divots beneath the blood or anywhere else in the area of the sidewalk to be seen on his photos."

After asserting the fraudulence of the prosecution's scenario, Schiffmann goes further and declares that the three prosecution witnesses supporting this scenario must have been lying.

Bullet and Fragments at Crime Scene

Even ignoring previous evidence that witnesses Robert Chobert and Cynthia White falsely testified, "the absence of any bullet traces or bullets in the sidewalk in front of 1234 Locust is irrefutable physical evidence that these two, plus witness Michael Scanlan, did not tell the truth at Mumia's trial. By that simple observation, a central part of the prosecution's theory is simply blown out of the water — and new evidence is on the table thereby for the coaching, coercion and manipulation of witnesses."

Schiffmann's entirely original ballistics analysis is the most explosive section of *Race Against Death*. Researched for more than three years, this chapter analyzes both the unexplained bullet and fragments found in the doorway of 1234 Locust Street and the copper bullet jacket found on the sidewalk (one full car-length from Officer Faulkner's body).

Most likely, the bullet shot into Faulkner's back (traveling at an upward angle and exiting slightly beneath his throat) came from the sidewalk behind Faulkner as he was facing northwest towards Mumia and towards the parking lot situated at the northeastern corner of the intersection of 13th and Locust, where Mumia came from.

The most logical way for Mumia to approach the scene was diagonally from northwest to southeast — but the only bullet fragment found in or around 1234 Locust that could have had anything to do with the shot in Faulkner's back traveled from northeast to southwest, at a sharp angle from where Mumia was approaching the scene!

Schiffmann shows that even if Mumia had approached the scene in an indirect and awkward way by almost circumventing it first, the bullet fragment in question cannot have come from a shot fired by him at that time. There was no evidence of any bullet further east down Locust where it would have been had Mumia shot Faulkner from his more logical approach to the scene from a northwestern direction.

Schiffmann writes in *Race* that "this evidence shows that the first shot that hit Faulkner did not come from the direction from which Abu-Jamal approached the scene, therefore it could not have been fired by Abu-Jamal, and was thus necessarily fired by some third person, a possibility that the prosecution has always adamantly denied."

Schiffmann told me: "The first key point is that Mumia is no murderer. If he shot at all, he shot to defend his own life, after he intervened at the scene in the first place to protect his brother, who had already been beaten bloody."

"Second, it is very unlikely that Mumia even took his gun out of his holster during that fateful night. What if the destruction of fingerprint evidence on Mumia's gun (shown in Polakoff's photos) was not just negligent, but deliberate? It would mean that the police themselves were the ones who drew Mumia's weapon (which had been empty apart from five spent cartridges to begin with) out of his shoulder holster."

The Third Person: Ken Freeman?

Schiffmann cites six witnesses (including several that were intimidated by police) that saw someone run away before police arrived, and then argues that this third person was most likely Billy Cook's business partner and friend, Kenneth Freeman.

In the 1995 PCRA hearings it was revealed that Faulkner had a license application in his front pocket (concealed from the defense for 13 years) for one Arnold Howard, who testified that he had loaned his temporary (non-photo) license to Kenneth Freeman.

Schiffmann explained to me that "Billy Cook's attorney Daniel Alva told Dave Lindorff (in his book *Killing Time*) that Cook had told him within days after the shooting that Freeman had been with him that night. There wasn't the slightest reason for Alva to have done so if it was not indeed true. Lying to journalists doesn't belong to the duties of a defense attorney, and the assumption that a well-respected member of the Philadelphia's legal community such as Alva would do so for no apparent reason makes little sense to me."

Returning to his ballistics analysis, Schiffmann argues: "A person climbing out of the passenger seat of Billy Cook's VW would have been ideally placed to fire the shot that hit Faulkner in the back and exited through the region below his throat. Faulkner had a clip-on police tie that was apparently hit right at that clip (since there was blood and lead on it). The tie was found nowhere near 1234 Locust where it should have been found had Mumia fired that shot in Faulkner's back. Instead, it was on the northern side of Locust shortly before the intersection of 13th and Locust.

"And this, in turn, means that the shooter must have been on the sidewalk in front of 1234 Locust – not in the street coming from the parking lot, as Mumia was."

Further supporting Schiffmann's arguments are the mysterious circumstances of Freeman's death. On May 13, 1985 (the same day police firebombed the MOVE organization's headquarters), Freeman was found dead in a parking lot. Likely murdered by police that day, he was found naked, handcuffed, and had a drug needle in his arm. Given the impossibility of injecting himself with the needle while handcuffed, the official explanation for the 31-year-old's death (heart attack) seems incredible.

"If Freeman was indeed killed by cops, the killing probably was part of a general vendetta of the Philadelphia cops against their 'enemies', and the cops killed him because they knew or suspected he had something to do with the killing of Faulkner," said Schiffmann.

The Arnold Beverly Confession

After years of careful analysis, Schiffmann concludes that the scenario presented by career criminal Arnold Beverly in his 2001 affidavit (stating that he killed Faulkner and that

Mumia

Continued from page 4

Mumia was not involved) is "too contradictory to be tenable."

However Schiffmann is highly critical of the courts' flippant rejection of the Beverly affidavit. Considering the seriousness of a death-row homicide case, he argues that they should have at least determined its credibility in a public court hearing.

The controversial Beverly scenario is no longer an issue in the courts, but Schiffmann argues that this may not be the worst thing. "The Beverly affidavit has often been a distraction from what should be the really central issues: frame-up, unfair trial, legal innocence, actual innocence. No Arnold Beverly is needed to show that Mumia should be a free man and shouldn't have spent even one day in jail."

Freiheit fur Mumia Abu-Jamal!

Noam Chomsky argues that "Mumia's case is symbolic of something much broader…The U.S. prison system is simply class and race war …Mumia and other prisoners are the kind of people that get assassinated by what's called 'social cleansing' in U.S. client states like Colombia."

Schiffmann also feels that Mumia's case is part of a much larger picture and devotes most of his book to providing a proper historical context. "Determined not to write the typical boring academic tract," Schiffmann told me: "My book's not just about Mumia. His case is important because of the larger legal, political, and social issues that his case exposes.

"I investigate the U.S.'s constitutional tradition, the history of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements, the horrendous history of city development in the U.S. tragically exemplified in Philadelphia, Mumia's extraordinary yet typical history of a Black youth alienated by the false promises the U.S. 'offered' for him as a young man of the wrong color, and finally the development of the U.S. into a virtual police state for many segments of the population."

Schiffmann emphasizes the extreme importance of Mumia's current battle in the courtroom, but feels that solid legal strategy will only go so far in gaining a new trial. The key will be to exert maximum political pressure from the grassroots in Philadelphia and around the world. A "broad, multi-faceted and democratic mass-movement," emphasizing that "Mumia is all of us," must be used to ensure real justice.

December 9, 2006 marks the 25th anniversary of Abu Jamal's arrest. Schiffmann urges...to support Abu-Jamal on Dec. 9 – the 25th anniversary of Abu-Jamal's arrest. "We have kept Mumia alive. Against the odds, we have won the first stage of an uphill battle. Now we must go on all the way – and that is to free Mumia Abu-Jamal!"

For more, visit his website: www.insubordination.blogspot.com.

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Learn to read,

Refer a friend.
Volunteer to help

Staff meeting

Letter to Editor from Jamal Hart

Continued from page 4

diminish our political prisoners rebelling death. As my dear father Mumia constantly believes: The people will have vindication from this atrocity of modern terrorism.

Black people are facing pure genocide today more than ever. Our misconception for the wrong things in life and false hope of little if not any political awareness but more material has lead us astray. This type of non-commitment within movements of improving the disparity and misdirection will lead us to our demise. That will allow us to remain in a complacent state of mind. What are we waiting for people? Our time is NOW! Our focus is to free our political prisoners, namely Mumia Abu-Jamal who is constantly protecting our future. When will we see the things that history not HIS-story has clearly shown us that only the selective ones will rise and rebel against falsehood? There are many of us that are knowledgeable and strong in many positive areas but remained separated and deceived by the crooked faces of this government.

Perhaps the need to enlighten your position and plight is urgent now more than ever. First, regain stability of knowing the truth and what needs to be done. Allow positive political movements in your life to educate you and others of the hidden diabolical nature deeply rooted within this racist and rogue legal system that camouflages terror and genocide against African people in this country.

We are the casualties, human chattel and the targeted victims of the sinister sadistic crooked faces that we have foolishly given trust. Political gain is so tempting and intoxicating to the crooked faces that knowingly destroy, dehumanize, and falsely persecute the rebellious ones. This is sadly misleading and completely false. To continue to dupe their constituents into believing that a street name in a city outside of Paris in the country of France is affecting law enforcement of the United States is unbelievable. Sadistically, these crooked faces want by any means to demonize our strong resistant freedom fighters by casting them away in cells to rot through time.

These crooked faces hide behind their civil, federal, and political duties by vigorously attempting to undermine and exploit the poor and misfortunate to be villains only to progress their malicious hidden agendas forward. How else could the racist death penalty not be abolished in other states when undisputed facts have proven it to be unconstitutional and cruel, especially after innocent people had to be exonerated for being innocent after being placed for numerous years on Death row, thereby forcing many states to abolish it totally? Also, how do they create a bill to evoke a street name in a whole other country in the good grace of "law-abiding American citizens for all Philadelphia Police Officers and the Fraternal Order of Police?

All of this contradicts Philadelphia Police Department's historical facts. Congressman Fitzpatrick and Congresswoman Schwartz do not want you to know or remember about the Philadelphia Police Department's years of corruption. While they were beseeching the 108th United States Congress and the Senatorial and Congressional representatives of Philadelphia to support this bogus resolution in condemning the decision of St. Denis France to name a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal who was falsely accused of murdering Officer Daniel Faulkner, they obviously forgot to state that the Philadelphia Police Department has been under an FBI investigation for police corruption for more than 7 years. Namely, the convictions of Chief Inspector Eugene Sullivan for Extortion in 1985, Deputy Police Commissioner James Martin for Extortion, Racketeering and Conspiracy with 6 other officers in 1984, Inspector John Benedetto, Captain Edward Spangler, and Captain John Wilson were all convicted for Extortion as well. In fact, over 30 known Philadelphia Police officers were convicted by the FBI during the 80's and who could forget the infamous 39th district precinct where many other officers were convicted on numerous corruption charges in 1995.

Perhaps, the sinister blinding fog of misleading information that has been falsely placed on the FOP website was used by these corrupt politicians Schwartz and Fitzpatrick. Now, how could they know that Officer Daniel Faulkner was a police officer at the beginning of the FBI probe? It was from 1980-1988, a 7 year investigation that plenty of police officers were snitching on each other. Many politicians climbed their way up the ladder during these times as well. In laymen's terms, they were crooked faces then as they are now. These facts were derived from the Philadelphia Daily News archives as early as 1978.

I encourage everyone reading this article right now to take the needed time to research these vile acts of Philadelphia police officers terror and corruption. The urgent need for my dear father Mumia Abu-Jamal is currently at its highest alert for the people to stop the wrongful execution of an innocent freedom fighter that has continued to fight for what's right even against all odds that these racist oppressors set for him.

We must unite as one body and form the biggest body of people that refuse to be deterred and will not stand by and allow this rogue government to place the wools over our eyes again and they have done in the past. We will prevail over these unlawful persecutions of innocent and working class people here in North Amerikkka and internationally! We will survive these atrocities only if we stand together in struggle against this philistine beast that continues to grow off the labor of Blacks and other working class people. We will win in triumph.

I'd like to thank all of you for understanding these crooked faces firsthand. Remember, they look forward to trick us once again. Ban that House Congress Resolution 407 bill NOW! I Jamal Hart, will continue to stand in solidarity for all my fellow freedom fighters until we are free. We must continue to move forward. The struggle does not stop! FREE ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, FREE MUMIA!

This statement was read at a Partisan Defense Committee rally for Mumia Abu-Jamal held on Saturday October 28th, 2006 in New York City. Write to Jamal at: Jamal Hart #50597-066, FCI Schuylkill, P.O. Box 759, Minersville, PA 17954-0759.

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CCBPP STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Commemoration Committee for the Black Panther Party (CCBPP) is committed to the goals of the Black Panther Party (BPP) as outlined in its Ten-Point Program which was written in 1966 by Party founders, Dr. Huey P. Newton and Bobby Seale.

The Ten-Point Program outlines goals and objectives toward changing conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression in all low-income and working class communities in the U.S. and elsewhere, as the basis for unity and solidarity.

Also, the CCBPP is committed to the concept of Revolutionary Intercommunalism, introduced by Dr. Newton in 1970 at Boston College. Our Revolutionary Intercommunalism holds that there are basically two sides. On one side there is reactionary intercommunalism which presently holds the world's low-income and working communities under conditions of economic exploitation and political oppression by controlling the wealth, resources and institutions in order to maximize profits for the few. Huey identified this side as the leading reactionary side (the ruling class) which consists of a minority, fewer than five percent of the world population. Under these conditions, reactionary intercommunalism, by and large, keeps the poor and working communities on a cycle of degradation, under conditions of reaction, desperation and poverty, with no end in sight. Newton understood that in order to change these conditions and advance the economic and cultural interests of these oppressed communities of the world, disciplined organizations must be built from the bottom up, enabling these low-income and working communities to fight exploitation and oppression by any means necessary (this fight needs to start in the advanced industrialized U.S. because our nation leads the world in political reaction and economic exploitation). CCBPP advances and upholds the goals which the BPP outlined in its Ten-Point Program, and those goals are about ridding black ghettos and low-income and working communities of economic exploitation and political oppression, understanding that we can reach these goals only by seizing the time at the point of practice.

Black Panther Party Ten-Point Program

WHAT WE WANT, WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. WE WANT FREEDOM, WE WANT POWER TO DETERMINE THE DESTINY OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that Black and oppressed people will not be free until we are able to determine our destinies in our own communities ourselves, by fully controlling all the institutions that exist in our communities.

2. WE WANT FULL EMPLOYMENT FOR OUR PEOPLE. We believe that the federal government is responsible and obligated to give every person employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the American businessmen will not give full employment, then the technology and means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all its people and give a high standard of living.

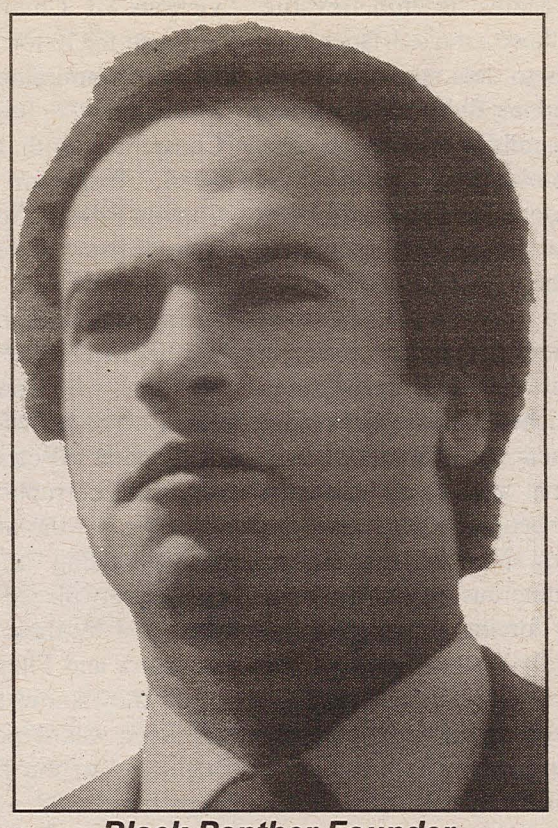
3. WE WANT AN END TO THE ROBBERY BY THE CAPITALIST OF OUR BLACK AND OPPRESSED COMMUNITIES. We believe that the racist government has robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules were promised 100 years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of Black people. We will accept the payment in currency that will be distributed to our many communities. The American racist has taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million Black people. Therefore, we feel this is a modest demand that we make.

4. WE WANT DECENT HOUSING, FIT FOR THE SHELTER OF HUMAN BEINGS. We believe that if the landlords will not give decent housing to our Black and oppressed communities, then housing and the land should be made into cooperatives so that the people in our communities, with government aid, can build and make decent housing for the people.

5. WE WANT EDUCATION FOR OUR PEOPLE THAT EXPOSES THE TRUE NATURE OF THIS DECADENT AMERICAN SOCIETY. WE WANT EDUCATION THAT TEACHES US OUR TRUE HISTORY AND OUR ROLE IN THE PRESENT-DAY SOCIETY. We believe in an educational system that will give to our people a knowledge of self. If you do not have knowledge of yourself and your position in the society and the world, then you will have little chance to know anything else.

6. WE WANT COMPLETELY FREE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL BLACK AND OPPRESSED PEOPLE. We believe that the government must provide, free of charge, for the people, health facilities that will not only treat our illnesses, most of which have come about as a result of our oppression, but will also develop preventive medical programs to guarantee our future survival. We believe that mass health education and research programs must be developed to give all Black and oppressed people access to advanced scientific and medical information, so we may provide ourselves with proper medical attention and care.

7. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO POLICE BRUTALITY AND MURDER OF BLACK PEOPLE, OTHER PEOPLE OF COLOR, ALL OPPRESSED PEOPLE INSIDE THE UNITED STATES. We believe that the racist and fascist government of the United States uses its domestic enforcement agencies to carry out its program of oppression against Black people, other people of color, and poor people inside the United States. We believe it is our right, therefore, to defend ourselves against such armed forces and that all Black and oppressed people should be armed for self-defense of our homes and communities against these fascist police forces.



Black Panther Founder, Dr. Huey P. Newton

8. WE WANT AN IMMEDIATE END TO ALL WARS OF AGGRESSION. We believe that the various conflicts which exist around the world stem directly from the aggressive desires of the U. S. ruling circle and government to force its domination upon the oppressed people of the world. We believe that if the U. S. government or its lackeys do not cease these aggressive wars that it is the right of the people to defend themselves by any means necessary against their aggressors.

9. WE WANT FREEDOM FOR ALL BLACK AND POOR OPPRESSED PEOPLE NOW HELD IN U. S. FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, CITY, AND MILITARY PRISONS AND JAILS. WE WANT TRIALS BY A JURY OF PEERS FOR ALL PERSONS ARE CHARGED WITH SO-CALLED CRIMES UNDER THE LAWS OF THIS COUNTRY. We believe that the many Black and poor oppressed people now held in U. S. prisons and jails have not received fair and impartial trials under a racist and fascist judicial system and should be free from incarceration. We believe in the ultimate elimination of all wretched, inhuman penal institutions, because the masses of men and women imprisoned inside the United States or by the U. S. military are the victims of oppressive conditions that are the real cause of their imprisonment. We believe that when persons brought to trial that they must be guaranteed, by the United States, juries of their peers, attorneys of their choice and freedom from imprisonment while awaiting trials.

10. WE WANT LAND, BREAD, HOUSING, EDUCATION, CLOTHING, JUSTICE, PEACE AND PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CONTROL OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY. When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to affect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpation, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism. It is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security.

This page is sponsored by ACT UP

AIDS in Africa: New Plague or Old Illnesses of Poverty?

Racist HIV Myth Hides Ruthless U.S. Exploitation.

Unlike in the United States, AIDS in Africa is most frequently diagnosed based on four very imprecise clinical symptoms—diarrhea, fever, persistent cough, and weight loss greater than 10% over two months. *HIV antibody tests are not required to diagnose a case of African AIDS.* These four clinical symptoms are identical to the problems created by conditions of poverty that have troubled Africa and other developing areas of the world for centuries. In fact, symptoms of the so-called African AIDS epidemic are indistinguishable from the effects of malnutrition, unsanitary drinking and bathing water, and common curable conditions like malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, and parasitic infections.

Rather than solve the problems of African poverty caused by centuries of ruthless Western exploitation, the U.S. government insists on broadcasting the doomsday notion that Africa is suddenly gripped by a deadly, spreading sexual plague. According to these American health authorities, salvation from sickness can only be found in profitable pills manufactured by the white West and exported to black Africa.

America's Racist HIV Myth

The idea that AIDS originated in Africa is a popular myth without any scientific or epidemiological evidence. News reports that blame AIDS on African green monkeys are based upon elaborate speculation about species-jumping viruses rather than reliable proof. Tall tales about the spread of AIDS are promoted through the most vulgar and racist sexual stereotypes about promiscuous African people.

Still, the numbers speak for themselves. According to the 1999 *WHO Global HIV/AIDS Report,* the total number of AIDS cases in Africa virtually equals the total number of cases in America even though Africa, with its 650 million citizens, has more than two times the population of the United States. Africa is often cited as a worst case example of what could happen in America despite figures demonstrating that 99.5% of Africans do not have AIDS, and among Africans who test HIV positive, 97% do not have AIDS.

The Truth About African AIDS:

- **HIV antibody tests are not required for an AIDS diagnosis in Africa.**
- **African AIDS is diagnosed by four very imprecise clinical symptoms:**
  - **— Diarrhea**
  - **— Fever**
  - **— Persistent cough**
  - **— Weight loss greater than 10% over two months**
- **Tuberculosis, malaria, and measles far outnumber cases of AIDS in Africa.**
- **AIDS is not the leading cause of illness or death in any African nation.**

While Africa is the frequent target of damaging AIDS media reports, the total number of cases on the continent is relatively small. For example, from 1981 through 1999 cumulative AIDS cases for South Africa, the area claimed hardest hit by HIV, were just 12,825.

Exporting Extermination: AIDS Pills Kill!

It is undeniable that experimental AIDS treatments like protease inhibitors and AZT are all highly toxic, dangerous products. Strokes, muscle wasting, anemia, physical deformities, dementia, birth defects, organ failure, and death are some of the "side effects" of these poisons. Thousands of gay men in the 1980s and 1990s died from AZT poisoning. Now the U.S. State Department has elevated AIDS to the level of a threat to national security in order to gain public support for exporting AZT to pregnant African women. Outspoken leaders like South African President Thabo Mbeki—hard pressed to explain why developing nations stricken with famine and civil chaos should spend what little money they have on toxic anti-HIV drugs while millions starve—are relentlessly attacked as unfit and crazy by racist Western media outlets.

We invite you to investigate the growing international controversy over the cause and treatment of AIDS for yourself. Clip and mail the coupon below for a free copy of the groundbreaking book *What If Everything You Thought You Knew About AIDS Was Wrong?* by AIDS survivor Christine Maggiore.

Fight the AID$ Fraud!

ACT UP San Francisco is the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power—a militant, direct action organization committed to ending the AIDS fraud. General body meetings are held every Monday night at 7:30 p.m. at 1884 Market Street and our medical marijuana dispensary is open 12:00 to 7:00 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Get involved. Join ACT UP! End the abuse of AIDS.

Clip and mail the coupon below to receive a free copy of the book *What If Everything You Thought You Knew About AIDS Was Wrong?* or contact us for more information at www.actupsf.com!

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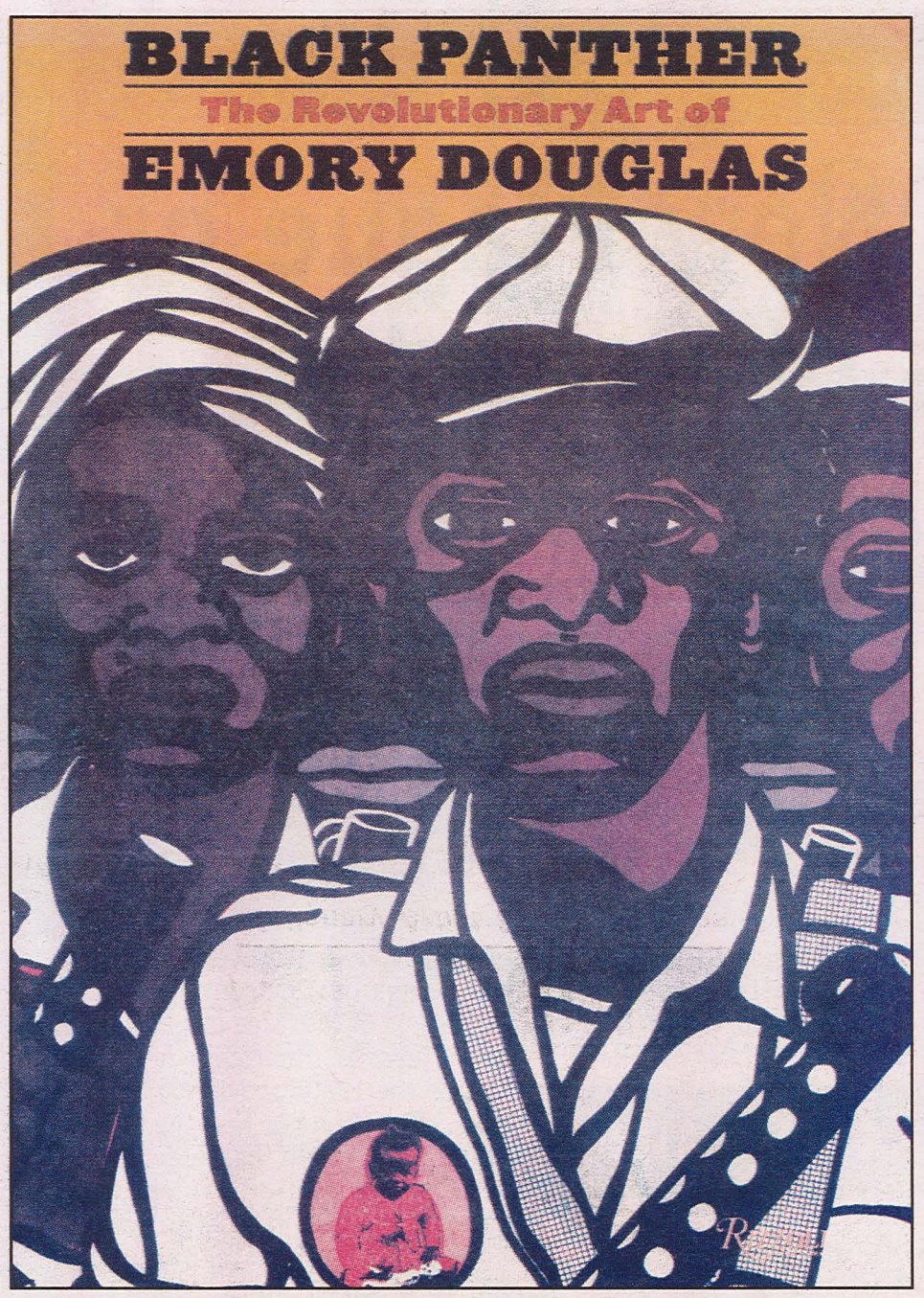


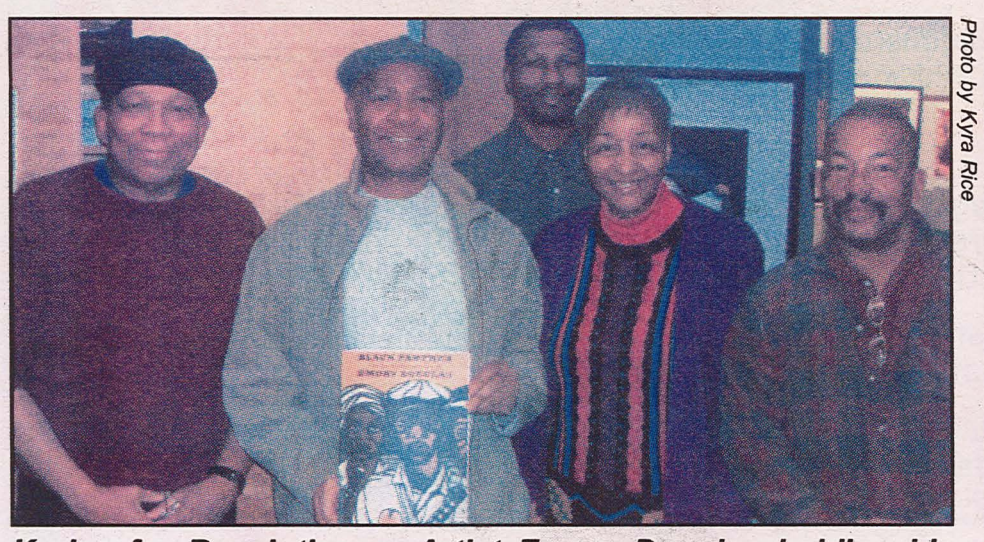


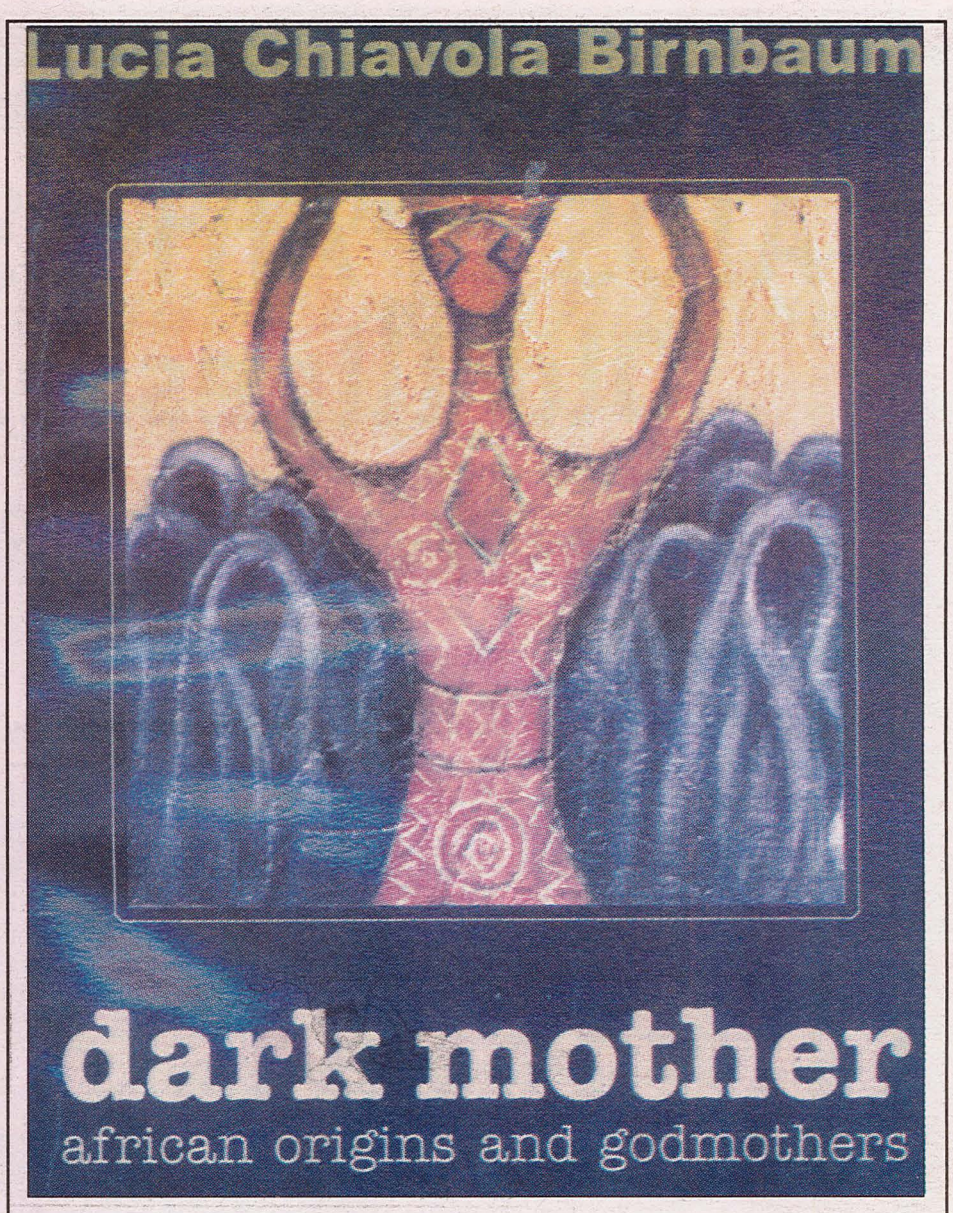
Photo by Kyra Rice

Kudos for Revolutionary Artist Emory Douglas holding his newly published book,* Black Panther, *surrounded by CCBPP staff. (l) Melvin Dickson, Commemorator Editor; Melvin Johnson (center), Administrative Assistant; Dorothy Bordenave, Mail-Out Coordinator; and Arthur Thompson, Volunteers Coordinator.

Black Panther: The Revolutionary Art of Emory Douglas *by Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. (Workhouse Publicity) will be available at your local book store soon. Locally, it can be purchased at Marcuse Book Store in Oakland, CA.*

The controversial Black Panther Party had a tremendous influence on the social and political landscape of the turbulent 1960s and 70s. However, often overlooked, the party also contributed a great deal of talent to the worlds of literature, film, and art.

Gina Garza, Publicist, Workhouse Publicity



Dark mother African origins and godmothers (New York, Chicago, Shanghai, www.iUniverse.com 2002) is now available in French edition as *La Mere Noire* (Paris, France, Menaibuc Editions with distribution in Africa and the Caribbean).

"What if everyone really understood that their oldest mother was African and Black?"
—Corinne Innis.

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Berkeley, California 94705
Phone & Fax - 510-841-8782
Website — www.darkmother.net
Email - Lucia@darkmother.net

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